

INNER HEALING AND DELIVERANCE FOR CHURCH LEADERS AND
STAFF

BY

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ABSTRACT

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I am presently working as Senior Pastor and Overseer for The FLOW Kingdom Ministries in the county of the Bronx, NY. I have continuously observed ministerial scenarios and I have found increased numbers of issues in Churches because of the inner ailments affecting church leaders and staff members. The inner suffering is usually caused by depression, anxiety, substance abuse addiction, unwillingness to forgive others and self-harm in severe cases. In the event no action is taken and such issues go unaddressed, the future of the present day church is likely to continue to deteriorate. The current study is aimed on establishing the extent of inner suffering and the impact of inner healing and deliverance among church leaders and other staff members. I have discussed the processes of soul transformation and behavioral modifications for the pastors. People from all walks of life experience a wide range of mental health conditions because of inner suffering. These challenges are increased in many communities because the church has failed to establish proper measures to address such inner sicknesses and improve the economic conditions of the congregations.

However, more financial and material resources are required to effectively establish a system of inner healing for the leaders and church staff. For example, The Department of Ministerial Care within the church is lacking contextual care for suffering ministers because there are not enough funds to provide the necessary services. The leaders and staff members cannot seek adequate care hence the reason why a huge ministerial gap in the

areas of inner healing and deliverance have been created unintentionally. The Pastor or leaders in the church normally do not complain about the issues increasing their emotional distress. Legal opportunities and regulations have also been ignored hence the reason why many pastors have nowhere to express their suffering. In my thesis, I will attempt to create an awareness and urgency about the importance of deliverance and how it should be administered in churches. Every active minister deserves to be aware of any tools available for them to renew their minds, restore hope, and build their relationship with God when experiencing inner pain and suffering. Deliverance awareness will help bring more interest in learning the various ways of how to deal with the countless challenges affecting the life of church ministers. Besides, it will also help strengthen my organization in the efforts to simultaneously promote the well - being of the ministers.

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I am profoundly honored and grateful to the Lord for granting me this opportunity to conduct and accomplish this study. It is a pleasure for me to watch the many lives around me being transformed and holistically fulfilling their calling. I am also thankful for the healthy support systems that God has placed around me. To my wife, there are no words. Her ability to remain consistent even in difficult circumstances is a true indication of her strong character. Maintaining one's posture can be a bit daunting, but when virtue becomes a way of life, even the strongest winds can't uproot that foundation. This describes the kind of woman that God has placed in my life. We will continue to walk this path of salvation and grace together.

To my daughters, I am stronger today because of the many distinct necessary challenges you have presented me with. Each one of you is like a different exercise targeting different muscles, causing great pain but giving greater results. To my grandmother, my parents, and my siblings, the ingredients that have been combined to form who I am today are all found in you. Every stage of my upbringing involved the input from each one of you. Your input has given me a greater perspective of the many people who have participated in my present world. To my closest friends and my spiritual family, the definition of a symbiotic relationship can be found in the paternal seed you have sown. The resulting fruits have been witnessed and we enjoy them together as a family. If it were not for that truth, today I would be on another path. Once again, I say Thank You and may the almighty God Bless you all so much.

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INTRODUCTION

Religious activities have become a central phenomenon for healing and deliverance.¹ The charismatic point of healing and deliverance is divine power deployment and authority in the name of Jesus the Christ. The Holy Spirit grants us freedom and protection from the demonic encounters and many psychological illnesses to promote inner healing and deliverance. Healing and deliverance are possible for every kind of issue among the population, including brokenness, demon-possession, and demonic oppression.² Another fact is related to the victims that can be altered and restored for positive thoughts after curing and healing psychologically in churches. One can enjoy God's fullness after understanding the righteous intentional actions of Christ's teachings. Particular Christ centered religious activities are purposeful and assists in fulfilling human needs. According to *Angels and Demons*, Pentecostal deliverance and healing ministries are becoming significantly popular for the minority population.³ Charismatic Pentecostal churches have a complete mission to establish healing and deliverance.⁴ These churches are motivated through a desire to spread ultimate holistic healing. The preachers and pastors are the leaders that are building trust among the population.

Inner healing was first publicly displayed in the last century within the mid-1940s by Agnes Sanford from the healing of memories. She taught the beliefs on inner healing at

¹ Eberstadt, Mary

² Baker, Carolyn. Love in the Age of Ecological Apocalypse

³ *Angels and Demons*

⁴ Allison, Jay, and Dan Gediman.

the School of Pastoral Care, where she was disclosing her view through books, seminars, and tapes.⁵ Further teachings through case studies have become popular, and it was a more natural approach to understand the contents. The practice of various approaches was followed by additional attempts to integrate professional disciplines with Christian healing. Furthermore, inner healing became a perspective, and it was developed into a distinctive model for pastoral counseling. It was part of the charismatic movement. When it comes to the literature, the information reveals that inner healing originated from the integration of neo-Pentecostal Christianity and psychotherapeutic models of counseling.⁶ Pastoral care and its need to be implemented has been increasing. It was based on a system of truths leading towards healthy minds. It also indicates the transpersonal dimensions of religion.

I am a Senior Pastor, and I have looked up scenarios many times to investigate church staff and disciples as well as their internal problems. Perhaps, they may not explain a thing to me appropriately. However, I have faced all types of different situations throughout the time that I have been a senior pastor. There were many ways to contextualize the social, economic, and health issues that pastors and church leaders were facing, but they were not always willing to share due to some isolated personal reasons. That time gave me a chance to think about the mental illness that pastors can face in their life and their struggles to keep it personal to avoid any false perceptions and confusion. Now, I can have a chance to explore these issues using many key stories in the Bible.

One key role model in the Bible is Moses; he lost the right to enter the Promised Land for forty years, and he faced most of these challenges to shift the mental arrested

⁵ ibid

⁶ ibid

development of a people. The Bible also portrays Joseph with the many difficulties that he faced during his life as a great man of God who moved in deliverance. He was thrown into a hole, sold to strangers, taken away from his beloved father, and betrayed by a woman, kept in prison, and still remained committed to freeing his people. In the end, he got everything that God had planned for him and all those in close proximity to him. This was all attributed to his strong faith in God. In uncommonly difficult situations, unusual healers are always needed for the inner healing and deliverance of many great women and men of God.

Another great example we can obtain is from Jesus and his ministerial work. God sent an angel to console him even when he was surrounded by all of His disciples. Jesus received strength from the Holy Spirit in the Mount of Olives before His arrest and Betrayal (Luke (22:43–44)).⁷ He was in agony, crying, and weeping even though He was the Son of God. Everyone was able to understand His agony at that time but they could not help him apart from seeking God's intervention. In the same accord, a pastor or a leader at church can also be in agony, but they do not show it to the congregation for many reasons. Subsequently, it turns into continuous distress and inner suffering.

There is much controversy about inner healing as it is also said to be superficial and propagates in circles within church groupings. The Ministry of inner healing in some churches is unacceptable and unchristian due to its humanistic practice. It is based on humanistic behavior and superficial means of solving problems. Another problem is the responsibility of taking the appropriate action that some pastoral care ministers refuse to

⁷ Pope, M. (2017)

take in this process. Another thing is its nature of not allowing a person to include their bad experiences in their personal life. Generalization is being followed in this aspect instead of equally following the inner healing concept for all disorders. Everyone has his/her own ways and intentions to manage the issues surrounding his life. However, a compressive approach is necessary to create a platform where all the mental illnesses can be covered. This would be a significant action towards pastoral recovery/care planning in churches and other religious denominations.

CHAPTER I:

PRESENTATION OF THE SITUATION ANALYSIS

The ways through which spiritual formation take place differ in different people's lives. The spiritual formation process depends on personal growth and maturity-in-Christ. The maturity can be hindered by multiple issues, including emotional imbalances, spiritual oppression, and lack of beliefs over God and unresolved struggles. Sometimes, the disciples and church leaders can face some disturbances and personal issues can reduce their belief to hold the activities successfully. However, Barron et al (2017) noted that most Christian leaders are becoming aware of the challenges that affect the inner lives of Christians and how they affect their social life. The spiritual life is not separate from social life in the sense that; one of the primary concerns of the people is how to completely maintain their religious walk within their social life.⁸ The Christian leaders have the capabilities to overwhelm the emotional roadblocks and the various hurting situations in their life but how can they effectively utilize these opportunities. The leaders and disciples may face particular emotional disturbances during childhood, and these memories may not allow them to treat everyone around them equally. The disciples may not be able to develop inner peace in their lives hence such deficiencies can greatly affect their teachings. Strong beliefs in Christ would turn their life and this belief can only be strengthened by building inner peace and promoting inner healing.

⁸ Barron, Jessica M., and Rhys H. Williams.

Through inner healing and deliverance, many lives can turn away from inner problems that would otherwise lead them into illicit behaviors, criminal activities, substance abuse, suicide, and other forms of self-harm. Christianity is also observed as a set of goals that are strategically aligned to develop cognitive information. Cognitive conventions are developed using ontological referents that involve people's beliefs, doctrine, and symbols in Jesus Christ our Lord and Savior. These components of doctrine, belief, and symbols also maintain cognitive testimonials that help believers retain the memories of the truths derived in Christianity. Christians experience such realities of life through their personal memories. A believer becomes a true Christian by actively participating in the activities that proliferate Christ centered teachings in their society. Such activities include regular devotions, Biblical study, praying, and development of spiritual faith and renewal of mindsets. Inner healing and deliverance are only possible when the believers and disciples show an active lifestyle and possess true faith in Jesus Christ as their personal Lord and Savior. The kind of attention which they pay to inner healing can create a difference in their lives and other believers can also observe their inner peace and be potentially inspired to strengthen their relationship with God.

The current study contributes to the knowledge of inner healing and deliverance by exploring the various ways through which the church can bring to light many lives that are facing social, spiritual, physical, and emotional suffering such as those experiencing mental illness and inner sickness because of their discipleship/pastoral work. Inner suffering is a true silent killer that is potentially affecting the social life of many pastors today. This is the fact that we cannot circumvent as senior pastors. The growth of the church is also hindered by the surrounding community that also faces a lot of challenges in the same

regard as the church. The number of social, economic, political, and spiritual challenges ruining the communities in which the church thrives has been increasing for the last decade.

For purposes of reducing these challenges, there is a need to create urgency for the active renewal of people's minds and hearts and strategically position them to accept Jesus Christ as their personal Lord and Savior. Pastors and church ministers facing serious mental disorders cannot see the spiritual value derived from being in good relationship with God. This is a fact and reality of the situation encountered by those disciples facing mental disorders. How can they investigate the issues around themselves yet they are held in the bondage of emotional and social suffering in their lives. They are not able to show the stress and work with similar devotion as those who are not experiencing inner sicknesses and growing in Christ. Today, the great women and men of God are experiencing various forms of mental disorders and they have not got adequate treatments for these disorders in their ministerial career.

Suffering in its forms is forcing many pastors to leave the ministry. According to Krejcir (2012), at least three pastors leave God's ministry in the United States every day while the majority remain in the church with their ministry burnouts because of inordinate ministerial demands. The increasing attrition rate in pastoral leadership is a global concern that should not be overlooked if we want to see future prosperity in God's ministry. Pastoral attrition is exacerbated by many reasons including staff conflicts, general time constraints, social challenges, criticism from the congregation, and lack of leadership development, lack enough funding to finance the ministry, lack of true friends, social isolation and rejection. Looking at these tough realities, it becomes clear that the current church ministry is not going smoothly as it should be. Krejcir conducted an online survey of fifty-one

pastors who had served in the USA, UK, South Africa, Norway, Germany, France, Netherlands, and Canada to examine the extent to which pastors suffer in their ministry⁹. His findings indicate that at least 75% of pastors had experienced severe difficulties in their ministry stemming from sadness, exhaustion, marital hardships, loneliness, fear, and intense opposition. This impression created by these surveys indicates that the increasing attrition rate in pastoral work is exacerbated by sadness, exhaustion, opposition, criticism, and isolation/loneliness in the ministry and these difficulties/ hardships are part of the pastoral career profile. Ask yourself, when will fear and loneliness become potential drawbacks of concern for a Christian who has no mental health disorder? Where is the spiritual component of this stigma?

Psychological illness and mental disorders that are associated with abnormal behavior, impaired functioning can lead to detrimental behavior. These can be associated with the faulty interpretations of reality, personal distress due to the self-defeating behavior, active perilousness, opposition of the status quo, and social rejection. To counter these issues, anxiety and stress management should be administered to the victim by biofeedback, cognitive behavioral therapy, relaxation techniques, physical exercises, medications, and dietary changes. However, these measures are superficial and they may not fully heal the sick due to unseen soul and spirit from where the emotions originate. These unmanaged emotions can ultimately lead to worse depression and anxiety.

Panic attacks are more common today and they are being treated with Talking Points Memos or TPM. Panic is an anxiety disorder that is associated with repeated and

⁹ Krejcir, R.J., <http://www.intothyword.org/>

episodic fear with associated physical symptoms, including heart palpitation, abdominal distress, dizziness, trouble breathing, and chest pain. The Fear of losing control over the congregation can generate panic attacks in pastors and these attacks produce a sense of unreality.¹⁰ The few treatments available for these anxiety disorders include cognitive behavioral therapy and medication, if necessary. However, the medicinal approach, I believe, is not viable in respects to changing paradigms that are shaping the world today. I don't agree with the medicinal approach, hence the reason for this dissertation. In my opinion, it becomes a quick fix to prevent self-inflicted harm and infractions to others but it does not create a permanent solution to the problem.

Anxiety and depression are very common disorders experienced by church ministers and pastors within our church community although the severity of the problem differs between adults and children. Anxiety disorders experienced by children and adolescents include specific phobias, social phobias, generalized anxiety disorder, obsessive-compulsive disorders among others. Adults usually experience a separation anxiety disorder, which is usually associated with the feeling of extreme isolation and panic because of being separated from home. Apparent estimates indicate 4% of the children and adolescents also experience separation anxiety disorder symptoms. That may last for a couple of weeks and maybe longer and can rise and fall throughout adolescence and adulthood. Childhood anxiety disorders are explained the same way as adult anxiety disorders consisting of biological, behavioral, and cognitive factors. The events causing an anxiety disorder in a child can differ from an anxiety disorder in an adult. However, the

¹⁰ Annas, George J., and Sherman Elias

same methods of treating anxiety disorders can be used with children, including psychodynamic, behavioral, cognitive, family, and group therapy. Just as adults develop circumstantial depression, children can develop the same depressed behavior based on environment and present situation — approximately 3% of children under the age of 17 experienced major depressive disorder symptoms of depression. In children and adolescents, this may include physical discomfort, irritability, and social withdrawal. Childhood depression and mental depression can be treated using cognitive therapy, social skills training, family therapy, and temporal medication therapy. Medication therapy seems to be more effective in adolescents than in children since they need to have more thoughts to self-inflict harm.

Another common disorder diagnosed with the great men and women of God is Schizophrenia. The DSM (Diagnostic and Statistical Manual) distinguishes five types of schizophrenia namely: Disorganized, catatonic, paranoid, undifferentiated, and residual schizophrenia. Disorganized schizophrenia can be diagnosed with confusion, incoherence, attention, and perception problems. Extreme social withdrawal and odd mannerisms or grimaces are present. Disorganized schizophrenia can also be associated with a flat or inappropriate affect, while catatonic schizophrenia is associated with psychomotor disturbances. People in this category spend their time in a catatonic stupor or the throes of catatonic excitement. Paranoid schizophrenia can be associated with delusions and auditory hallucinations. A diagnosis of undifferentiated schizophrenia will occur if the individual suffering from the disorder shows symptoms not neatly fitting into one of the other categories. Residual schizophrenia is accompanied by a lessening of symptoms and may be associated with blunted or inappropriate emotions, social withdrawal, eccentric

behavior, and some illogical thinking.¹¹ Usually, these inappropriate emotions and eccentric behaviors may lead to a devastating conclusion. Many people put a blind eye to this silent killer we know as suicide, which starts with depression, anxiety, and poor self-esteem. However, we will attempt to demonstrate a non-medicinal approach to diagnosing and addressing these conditions in Pastors and church ministers.

Previously, I had worked as a senior pastor of the church in the West Farms area near the B r o n x Community Board in South Bronx, New York. This church was mainly comprised of Hispanics and African Americans. The following are statistics taken from the Bronx Community Board 3 website. This is a comparison of income support issues from 2012 to 2017.

	<u>2012</u>	<u>2017</u>
Cash Assistance (TANF)	13,533	10,297
Supplemental Security Income	12,213	11,463
Medicaid Only	50,538	60,423
Total Persons Assisted	69,183	77,681
Percent of Population	42.7%	45.6%

Just a decade ago, West Farms was considered one of the most impoverished areas, which had ultimately attracted a lot of criminal activity. This outlook was bleak although things have changed over the last few years. The neighborhood has largely changed from its past situation with drastically reduced crime rates and a wave of new economic and

¹¹ Allen, Sandra. A Kind of Mirraculas Paradise

social developments.¹² However, according to a report by the Urban Justice Center's Community Development Project, the South Bronx has struggled for years with three of the most pressing social and economic inequities that affect urban, low-income communities: high unemployment, poor public health, and substandard housing condition

I have vast experiences in these devastating social and economic situations and this experience has motivated me to write about such circumstances. Many pastors in the South Bronx are working in communities mixed with a diversity of Americans, African Americans, and Hispanics. I have identified the need for inner healing and deliverance for these disciples, leaders, and pastors to create a positive impact on the social life of the public in this region where they serve. I have also observed a huge number of men and women who heal the wounds through spiritual values. I have noticed the need for behavioral modification through soul transformation. I do have a passion for bringing a change in the pastoral ministries and for redeveloping the thoughts of disciples and preachers about inner healing and deliverance. I also want to help my colleagues understand the facts related to inner healing and desire of the people who are under the influence.

Based on the presented statistics and literature in the above paragraphs, it is now evident that pastors are working under fear, panic and other forms of suffering that are pushing them away from the ministry so that they can get relieved of their stress-related duties. Diversity in the ministry is a significant factor that should not be overlooked if we are to develop the church. This kind of diversity is created by either the visible church or

¹²“Demographics,” <http://www.nyc.gov/html/bxcb3/html/demographics/demographics.shtml>

the world church. When we read the book of Acts 20:28, it becomes evident that the ministry cannot thrive in a post-Christian and chaotic world where the pastor is surrounded by enemies of spirituality. In addition, the culture of the pastor's personality against the biblical meaning of the church and the failure of the pastors to receive of the spirit, prepare pastors to fail and fall. Pastors need a collegial approach to church ministry both in the walls of the church and in communities where they serve. Some churches are structured in a systemic way that undermines the vitality and the health of junior pastoral leadership in the church especially in the 21st century in Western countries. This creates a need for churches to adopt mission ontology philosophy, which requires that churches should look at themselves as the missionary communities established by God to send the gospel message to the surrounding communities.

CHAPTER II:

PRELIMINARY ANALYSIS OF THE SITUATION

There is a diversity of evidence presented in the existing literature and real-life testimonies on healing and deliverance used to promote the spiritual, social, and emotional growth of church leaders. Several researchers highlight the various issues including depression, anxiety, and stress that church leaders and staff face in their ministerial journey and their personal lives. Unfortunately, some of the religious leaders do not understand the meaning of healing and deliverance in church leaders. However, the staff at the Charismatic and Pentecostal churches are getting more active towards integrating inner healing and deliverance in their pastoral care ministries and programs. A few churches have focused on maintaining healing and deliverance as an important part of the lives of great men and women of God. Flow Kingdom Ministries in the Bronx is one of the examples of the few churches where inner healing and deliverance are highly cherished for the growth of pastors and expression of maturity in Christ. Even the daughter churches of the Northeastern region need some special programs for inner healing and deliverance among the staff members.

Various studies have indicated that the healing and deliverance ministry is increasing in most of the world regions because of the increasing demand for it by various Christian communities and social support groups. In the same accord, churches are also getting the motivation to establish such programs aimed at promoting inner healing. There is a positive relationship between church growth, leadership development, and inner healing. This relationship is a motivating factor towards strengthening and building the capacity in church leadership. Most of the urban regions and low-income areas are under

threats because of the increasing substance abuse, crime rate and these challenges have also crossed over to the worshipers.

Lack of evidence-based research in areas of social and emotional development creates a knowledge gap on how to address some of the aforementioned social and emotional challenges. Secondly, inner sicknesses are not directly evident to those who have no spiritual powers to get revelations and identify those who are deeply experiencing pain. Actually, this is one of the problems hindering the healing and deliverance ministry at the flow Kingdom Ministries. The connection between social life and mental problems is not evidence-based hence it is difficult to identify such problems and to develop appropriate strategies to rectify them. The background of this thesis is focused on how we can identify those who are experiencing inner suffering and established appropriate measures, guided by the will of God to bring a behavioral change among the church leaders and staff members. The practice of healing and deliverance must be deeply and effectively managed because there are many pastors and church ministers who are suffering but cannot express their suffering or give accurate information about domestic problems.

Kelsey's work presents the historical information that can be used to understand the real meanings of healing in Christian practices and understand its importance in promoting mental and physical growth.¹³ Kelsey's work highlights the various reasons as to why the churches should focus on inner healing and deliverance instead of focusing on only preaching the word of God and the Gospel of God's Kingdom. He indicates inner healing should be treated as an essential aspect of Christianity.

¹³ Morton T. Kelsey

Gbordzoe has also indicated why church growth should be treasured as a primary aspect of bringing people into fellowship with Jesus Christ. The power of the Holy Spirit is believed to promote the growth of the church through various activities whose purpose is focused on establishing further growth and maturity in Christ. In such activities, the church is able to fulfill its biblical mandate to protect and preserve the growth of Christianity. Gbordzoe emphasized that the growth of the church is supported by the holiness of the believers, their physical health and relationships that humans develop with Jesus Christ. According to Gbordzoe, there are five dimensions through which religious leaders can develop the church. These include; human relations, power of the Holy Spirit, physical wealth, holiness, and numbers. These dimensions can be effective if they are accompanied by deliverance and inner healing of believers for facilitating further growth of the church.

Throughout the thesis, I have indicated that communication among the pastoral or church leaders is one of the frightening tasks that some of these church ministers cannot easily associate with. From my experience and the views of the public, I have investigated that the desire to protect their integrity is part of the pastor's life. Some of the pastors decide to retain silence in their suffering for purposes of protecting their integrity. In such an environment of silence, it is always difficult to identify the right person that should be subjected to receive inner healing since most of the religious leaders hesitate to share their personal affairs and secrets with other church leaders. Someone may call it a sign of weakness but is the reason as to why it is difficult to maintain personal contacts with church leaders. It can be useful sometimes since some of the people who want to understand the challenges faced by church leaders are just mockers. Silence can be used

as a sign of showing the capability to independently manage challenges. Therefore, most people stay away from information sharing to protect their integrity. For these reasons, there is a need to establish a new dimension of promoting deliverance and inner healing in every church. The people who need deliverance in the churches are being handled by a person having a specific position or authority in the church. However, some of the pastors and church ministers do face difficulties while sharing their personal problems in fear of retaliation, punishment, and loss of privacy. As a result, those church leaders stay away from deliverance and inner healing.

Because of growing up in a church and working with many leaders, I was personally able to witness anxiety and depression faced by religious leaders while experiencing difficult times. Such emotional challenges are disturbing some of these leaders not only in church activities but also in their homes. A lot of them were not able to escape the grip even they were proclaiming freedom in the church to the general public. They were living and operating under pressure and stress yet they were pretending to be free of all the stress and anxiety that they were feeling at home.

Edwin Rivera, in his book, *Transformation without Limit*, indicates how the minds and body can experience the wounds of social, emotional, and physical suffering. Those forms of suffering are commonly experienced by the victims of sexual abuse and those experiencing traumatic issues. His historical views on inner suffering provided us with a glimpse of the procedure to constantly protect the mind for life sustainability. Life has presented events that impact the reflective elements of existence. It is not only beneficial at a personal level but also extremely valuable globally. The Great Economic Depression under the presidency of Herbert Hoover, when the economy of the United States of

America was collapsed in 1929 was the main reason as to why over 15 million remained unemployed leading to violence, disparity, and hopelessness.¹⁴ This great economic crisis was very troublesome to the churches and fellowships in this period. The dark historical period has taught us the simple and fundamental lessons that we should always be prepared for such events in life. During this time of The Great Depression, even the President was unaware of the intensity of this problem. He declared that depression would last for 60 days yet he had underestimated its powerful effects on damaging the morale of the nation.

Consequently, in 1933, President Franklin Delano Roosevelt developed a completely different paradigm to bring a change. He started with mindset change for the purpose of changing the country's directions. He started with the Civil Conservation Corporations and this project was aimed at creating employment for the 3 million unemployed young people aged between 17 to 23 years. He has started various projects, including reforestation, bridge building, and road construction and reinforcing infrastructure. Almost all of these programs added 8.5 million employment opportunities and acted as a source of earning for women. He also initiated the brain building and campaign in which he introduced a weekly radio program to motivate others for better mental health. His focus was to share a message of hope to those who had lost hope because of previous challenges.

In the same accord, some churches have followed the same direction to utilize Inner healing ministry as an evangelistic tool to restore people's hope. Religious activities related to healing and deliverance are being conducted in the charismatic and Pentecostal

¹⁴: Edwin Rivera

churches today.¹⁵ It is also evident that these churches are also using the healing and deliverance ministry to maintain the Christian community and facilitate church growth. Their religious activities aimed at promoting healing and deliverance includes all-night prayers, revival meetings, and Bible study sessions, casting out demons, and administering corporate prayers. Unfortunately, these therapies may not be enough when it comes to specialized treatment options for depression and anxiety.¹⁶

These realities and experiences of healing and deliverance have motivated me to go ahead and establish a foundation for a deliverance ministry program for the Pastors and leaders of the Flow Kingdom Ministries. Through this dissertation, I decided to conduct a study that analyzes the perspectives and ideas these ministers have regarding the need for inner healing and what should be included in the inner healing and deliverance programs. Deliverance for ministers will help inform pastors about how to deal with a series of ministerial challenges and simultaneously encourage pastoral leaders within the District of the Bronx to equip and educate fellow ministers on how to maintain their physical, spiritual, mental, and emotional well-being throughout their life in God's ministry.¹⁷ In Christianity, deliverance ministry refers to the activity of cleansing a person of demons and evil spirits in order to address problems manifesting in their life as a result of the presence of said entities and the root causes of their authority to oppress the person.

¹⁵ Eberstadt, Mary

¹⁶ Hahn, Matthew

¹⁷ Czerkasij, Alla. Deliverance

CHAPTER III:

DESCRIPTION OF THE HEALTH PROJECT FOR HEALERS AND SUPPORT GROUPS FOR SHEPHERDS

The inner healing and deliverance project is driven by the need to identify the health issues that church leaders and staff usually face and struggle-with silently. For this cause, I think the ministries have to be aware of these issues and how they can deal with them in case they happen in their lives. Unfortunately, there are very few avenues and resources that can help them to arrange such inner healing and deliverance activities for the purpose of controlling depression, anxiety, and other related problems in pastors. There are some gaps that I have noticed during my survey of The Flow Kingdom Ministries. Minorities have few opportunities to bring such initiatives in action as the church is located in an urban region where the developments are virtually impossible without specific resources in place. Cultural values also play a vital role in influencing healing and deliverance activities since urban culture is always rigid to such changes. These are some of the challenges that pastoral ministries are facing in The Flow Kingdom Ministries. The existing resources cannot be utilized by the needful population due to cultural differences and diversity of the ethnicities present over here. For the current project, I need to understand the diversity of the culture in relation to the specific social, emotional, and spiritual needs of believers. But, the presence of multiple social classes in the region increases creates some difficulties for this project to thrive. Everyone has different perceptions about the concerns and real-life problems that I have highlighted in the research. The presence of a lot of ethnicities, races, social classes, and standards of education makes it difficult to organize proper meetings for primary data collection.

3.1 Description and Foundation of Support for Church Staff

The church staff members need to have group support by arranging regular meetings after a certain period so that they can review their status in God's ministry, identify gaps, and develop solutions on how to address such gaps. The meeting can be arranged either quarterly or after two months. The meeting needs to be developed in a proper environment to avoid discrepancies and social prejudices. I would like to improve the confidence of the staff members and maintain proper privacy as they share their deeper feelings. The confidence development will help to identify the real-life problems that pastors are facing and discuss their internal issues freely. Pastors usually do not express their personal matters but decide to stay silent in suffering, which subsequently reduces their fellowships and greatly impact their relationships in society.

Of course, suffering and sickness are inevitable in the ministerial world that we as pastors traverse. Despite the existence of healthcare facilities, such as nursing homes, clinics, hospitals, and local health centers, sicknesses, trials and tribulations are always with us(Mark14:7). Pastors not only need medical healing but also need to have psychosocial support such as counseling, mentorship, empowerment, etc. Healthcare providers such as nurses, health volunteers, doctors, and pharmacists need to work with religious women and men groups, social support groups, and counselors/psychotherapists to promote deep inner healing of the soul rather than concentrating exclusively on the healing of the body.

Sicknesses and suffering torment everyone who believes in a fair and just world. In church ministry, they greatly hinder the pastor's continuity of faith in the kindness and goodness of God. For example, persistent emotional distress makes pastors believe that

they serve an unresponsive God who rewards with suffering instead of rewarding with the crown. Support groups form the basis of restoring hope and faith in the kindness, goodness and the healing power of Jesus Christ. The suffering of religious leaders is not a new phenomenon. In his preaching, The Apostle Paul spoke about suffering and sicknesses among the church ministers in Romans 5:3-4. This reason has made it simple for the contemporary ministers to exhaust their thoughts on the sicknesses and suffering of religious leaders to derive the true meaning and explanation of what they encounter. His messages contain some reflections on the meaning of suffering in Christian ministry. Majority of Paul's authoritative letters to the Romans, Philippians, Hebrews, and instructions to Timothy highlight suffering and sickness as a great concern hindering the progress of God's ministry but also give guidelines on how such negative encounters should be dealt with for continuity of the Ministry (Romans 5:3-4) *"Not only that, but we also boast in our suffering, knowing that suffering produces endurance, endurance produces character, and character produces hope"*.

On the other hand pastors need to have social support groups to create amicable avenues through which they bring greater attention and compassion to the humility-related sufferings and the associated mystery that they sometimes go through when they are executing their ministerial work. Support groups help the pastors to understand the Christian meaning of human suffering and sicknesses hence they need counseling from their colleagues.

The current church should have a great concern for all the sick including its ministers and congregants. Support groups form one of the best ways to express this kind of concern. The Christian community formed by support groups should use multiple

manifestations to pay courtesy to the world of suffering and sickness. Since its inception, the church has been committed to providing social support and comfort to those who are facing trial moments, tribulations, and persistent suffering of any kind. The foundation of social support is to create comfort for the victims of suffering in the form of spiritual support. Support groups open the new consoling horizons of faiths to pastors who might be experiencing difficult moments in their lives.

Regular meetings with fellow pastors are not only part of pastoral care and mission that the church can render to those who are suffering or sick but also creates a strong foundation for building unity between humanity and the church. Living the world of suffering creates distortions in man and greatly hinders his faith in God. The pastoral society can also be sick because of individualistic tendencies, egoism, greed, hatred, and other distortions that create inner suffering and sickness. The importance of attending meetings that are organized by support groups is to eliminate such negative psychological noise by revising spiritual and moral values so that the thoughts of church ministers are streamlined to listen to God's calling for the salvation of mankind. All forms of indifferences that trouble mankind should be negated with persistent attendance to support groups. Regardless of the increasing technological and scientific breakthroughs that have created more discoveries of medications, the church remains a firm foundation of promoting psychosocial support and has a special role to play in restoring the hearts of those who are in distress, disappointed, hopeless, or experiencing various forms of suffering. The relevance of forming support groups is to show love to the church ministers and pastors who are afflicted by the human mystery in their ministerial endeavors. The generous efforts shown by the ministers in Christ to the priests, lay leaders, episcopates,

pastors and other ministers is a true indication that believers have developed the sensitivity to the victims in pain. In so doing, the church is able to provide holistic care not only to the congregants but also to the ministers and pastors who experience suffering in their lives.

Regular/routine meetings with fellow pastors help us to gain a deeper understanding of the reality of suffering and devise the means through which they bring spiritual and physical relief to pastors who are experiencing suffering and distress. In the expression of church concern for the suffering and the sick, The Apostle Paul encourages Church ministers and Christians to show solidarity to those who are experiencing pain (Philippians 1:29; 3:10; 2 Timothy 3:12; 2:2-3). This form of commitment requires the establishment of special avenues in which the great women and men of God can listen to God's word, celebrate sacraments, share the word, and send prayers to everyone who is experiencing emotional and physical suffering. The Apostle Paul reminds us to have one single mind and one single heart to have solidarity and share the good news. He also reminds us that "If one member suffers, all the members suffer together" (1Corinthians 12:26). The collaboration of the great men and women of God makes them express goodwill and commitment to such solidarity and communion to transform the Christian community into the house of hope. The great concern for the suffering and the sick expressed by Apostle Paul calls all of us to intensify our efforts to translate the Holy Communion that he talks about into fruitful projects. Social and emotional support for Church staff is one of the concrete projects that we ought to partake in. This implies that the pastoral community and the followers of Christ should collaborate and devote themselves to present the subjects of inner suffering, emotional distress, persecution, and illnesses into the light of the Gospel. The aim is to defend the life and the integrity of

pastors from society's misconception hence creating preferential options for the suffering to experience the visible light of God's favor and glory upon them regardless of the surrounding circumstances.

Nevertheless, as the church pursues its mission to the suffering staff members, it must do so prophetically such that everything done in those social gatherings is conducted in accordance with the will of God. For example, Paul emphasized the need for the ecclesial community to always become humble when rendering service to those who are experiencing humanity suffering. Christian communities from various churches are encouraged to contribute to the evangelization process by ministering to those who experience and suffer pain. In so doing, they embrace the Cross that Our Lord Jesus Christ carried to restore the Gospel of hope in the entire world (1Peter 3:15). The basis of supporting the suffering and sick staff members and congregants of the church is the fact that life is a precious gift granted by God. It is the real expression of the love of God for humanity. By its mission and nature, the pastoral community is supposed to share the Cross of Christ in periods of hope, joy, anxieties, and sorrows for its members. Since its inception, the church of Christ has always loved to sustain humanity by expressing its efforts to improve health and fight against inner pain. After the sick and suffering staff members get healed, they bear witness of God's favor on mankind and the manifestation of his glory for other believers. In the pastoral meetings and support groups, the commitment of the church to the suffering and the sick is guided by the view of how man is created in God's Image and granted indisputable human rights and dignity that should be protected all over the world. In addition, the meetings are guided by the gospel and the true word of God expressed through biblical teachings, prophetic revelations, and soul-

touching messages. Through these guidelines, the church will have a firm foundation for promoting ecclesial pastoral healthcare to the pastors and ministers as it has always been done for the congregants.

3.2 The support group as a Christian community

Support groups are the meetings of people who come together to assist one another in their surrounding circumstances. For example, people can meet in their social groups to encourage, advice and maintain better health, especially to those who are losing courage because of their inner suffering. These group meetings restore hope because they integrate various elements of social support such as assisting, comforting, admonishing, and encouraging one another. Support groups call upon all believers to show solidarity in this manner. In most cases, Christian support groups have yielded positive results because they are made up of few people who intentionally decide to gather regularly and share what is going on in their lives especially those life events that rarely take place in their lives.

The groups are composed of people who share similar/related experiences and difficulties. For example, the members might have either experienced domestic violence, gone through a divorce or struggling with addictions or they have suffered a great loss.

One of the common behaviors exhibited by support groups is that they target a specific need, which helps people to find common grounds of associating with one another. The distinctive purpose is to strengthen those who are struggling or suffering from life stressors, through unconditional acceptance and compassion. The prayer and the bible may be used as tools to address the need but the purpose of the group may not necessarily be to study the bible or have prayer sessions. Thus, a support group is neither a prayer group nor a bible study group as some people confuse it with these two groups. Besides, a support

group is not a primary evangelic event for the Christian community although the members are encouraged to maintain the witness of Christ.

Who should attend or participate in a support group? All Christians who feel isolation/rejection in their suffering; those who need to talk and confide in someone who understands their situation; those who feel lonely and helpless in the society; those who are oppressed and marginalized by other members of society or those who are deprived of their rights should seek the comfort from the support groups. Owning up to the fact that these categories of peoples experience different problems and have different needs to address, it remains unclear whether they should meet in one place. In most cases, Christian support groups meet in the community playgrounds, in churches, in a home of their fellow member, in community halls, resource centers among other places. Meeting in such places offer a more non-threatening and relaxed atmosphere than simply meeting in congested places because Christians want to have a formal feeling to the gathering. Such meetings may not threaten unbelievers and may give a great feeling and comfort to the meeting.

Usually, support groups need five basic/essential elements namely: the sense of belonging, unconditional acceptance, an atmosphere of trust and confidentiality. Christians must have the feeling that they are secure and safer when they are going to share and open up their innermost feelings with those whom they feel are suitable to hear and understand their situations. Once they detect that someone is going to fix or judge them, they will not open up their deepest feelings. However, if they feel safe and believe that the members of the social group care about them and accept them with their difficult situations, they are more likely to share their innermost feelings and open up to those whom they confide-in.

The first support group/Christian community was founded by our Lord Jesus the Christ when he elected a group of twelve disciples who later on became apostles. These disciples walked in their ministry with Jesus, participated in many dialogues with Him, slept together with Jesus Christ, and ate with Him on the same dining table. They did not simply watch Jesus Christ performing miracles nor did they simply listen to words but they also shared with Him their challenges, frustrations, weariness, persecutions, health conditions, and perceptions among other experiences. Therefore, Jesus was the founder of the first affective support group in the community although he picked members from various fields, backgrounds, and ministries. The binding factors that promoted the unity and solidarity of the disciples were so important that even after Jesus had left the earth and ascended into Heaven, the disciples kept on communing together. In fact, after the death of Judas, Peter looked for another apostle to occupy the position of Judas such that they would not experience any ministerial gaps in their community. They wanted to remain a group of twelve people and stay together in the same way that Jesus had established them.

The Bible encourages Christians to form support groups in their communities and share the feelings, challenges, frustrations, and weariness of those who are deeply hurt in their souls. Prophet Jeremiah in his book chapter 25:36 encourages believers to listen to the cries and lamentations of their fellow believers. He says "*.....Hear the cry of the shepherds*" The word of God passed through the prophet to encourage Christians to always listen to the lamentations of the shepherds and the flock. In this regard, the shepherds must groan and become intercessors for the pain suffered by their flock when they see that the pastures of their flock have been destroyed. This is the true depiction of the reality of the great women and men of God who have to constantly observe the suffering

and the pain of their fellow Christians in addition to managing their personal sufferings, also see Hebrews 10:24-25 for the same cause. It says;

“24 And let us consider how we may spur one another on toward love and good deeds, 25 not giving up meeting together, as some are in the habit of doing, but encouraging one another—and all the more as you see the Day approaching”. In this aspect, the Apostle Paul encourages Christians to always meet and make a habit of encouraging their colleagues to stay focused on the ministry and enjoy the good deeds and the love of Christ.

Similarly, the epistle according to 1 Peter 2:9-10 says that;

“9 But you are a chosen people, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, God’s special possession, that you may declare the praises of him who called you out of darkness into his wonderful light. Once you were not a people, but now you are the people of God; once you had not received mercy, but now you have received mercy ever and ever. Amen”.

Apostle Peter recognizes the need for Christians to have oneness as God’s people. This form of togetherness encourages Christians to find a common ground for their union that will eventually turn into an acceptable value in the community. King Solomon in the book of Ecclesiastes 4:9-12 also acknowledges the relevance of togetherness and formation of Christian communities in the form of support groups. He says that;

“.....Two are better than one because they have a good return for their labor.....”(Verse 9). He goes on to clarify that *“.....If either of them falls down, one can help the other up. But pity anyone who falls and has no one to help them up...”* (Verse 10).

In verse eleven, King Solomon teaches us that if we work together as Christians, we feel a sense of belonging. Even when we feel that we are overcome by difficult situations or the

surrounding circumstances, it is easier to defend ourselves when we work together. The bible says that “.....*Also, if two lie down together, they will keep warm. But how can one keep warm alone? Though one may be overpowered, two can defend themselves. A cord of three strands is not quickly broken.....*” Ecclesiastes 11-12.

Support groups cannot exist without the founding ethics and principles. The group members must endeavor to define what is moral and immoral, what is good and bad. The manner in which people should conduct themselves in their support groups determines the outcomes of their endeavors. The book of Leviticus 19:15-18 presents the guidelines that God gave Moses on how his followers should behave in support groups such that they stay in unison. Believers must not show partiality to the oppressed and the poor nor pervert any form of justice but rather judge their fellow Believers fairly, verse 15. Believers are further encouraged to desist from gossiping and promoting defamation amongst themselves, verse 16. This means that whatever is shared in confidence should remain confidential to whoever received it. It should not cross to other people who are not members of the support group. In verse 17, Moses advises the Israelites to desist from doing anything that harms the lives of their fellow members in the support group. He rebukes inner hatred and tells believers to avoid retaining hate in their hearts against their fellow community members. Even in Verse 18, God commands the Israelites to avoid holding grudges or bearing revenge against every community member and encourage them to love their neighbors in the same way they love themselves. 18 *“Do not seek revenge or bear a grudge against anyone among your people, but love your neighbor as yourself. I am the LORD”*. Following these guidelines, it is evident that Christians in the early church history stayed together and had common causes. They could sell their possessions and property to support

those who were needy. In most cases, they could fellowship in the temple courts and engage in various discussions to share and address the various challenges, experiences, worries, concerns, and other circumstances affecting their lives. For example, even after the ascension of Jesus Christ in heaven, the apostles could have Holy Communion in their homes, eat together with sincere hearts, then praise and worship God while enjoying the favor of all the neighbors. Day by day, Christ added their numbers as people continued to receive salvation and joined the Christian community (Acts 2: 42-44).

The apostolic missionary work of forming support groups among the believers that were exhibited in the early church has greatly influenced the contemporary practices in the church today. Christian communities form a cornerstone of the church culture that stimulates ministerial penetration into the hearts of the believers. The conduct and behavior of the apostles and other pastors in the ancient church continue to influence pastoral work today hence it should not be ignored when contextualizing how support groups should be formed, run and managed to form a well-founded Christian community. Every member of the support group is the facilitator not a monopolist or the dictator of the group hence he/she should act as a servant leader or the role model. For support groups to thrive, members must get acquainted with the gathering time such that the attendance to the group is regular and flexible to all members. Each gathering must engage Christians on a springboard topic from which the discourse may emerge. Everyone should be given a chance to participate in the discourse by sharing their status and their conversations should be guarded against interruption by those who want to dominate the gathering.

Support groups are also enjoyable when they reserve some gatherings for motivational speakers, guest speakers, or special events and people are not being forced to

share their deeper feelings when they are not yet comfortable with the environment in which the group is run. Therefore, the significance of forming support groups as Christian communities is to enable pastors to influence the communities they are serving where injustices might have ruined the society and people are experiencing inner pain and suffering without hope. Today, Pastors are faced with the global challenge of the increasing economic disparities, diseases, sicknesses, social inequalities, economic disparities, marginalization of the poor, orphans, and Widows among other forms of injustices that are evident in the congregations and communities served. It is only through support groups that these challenges can be addressed with ease.

3.3 Psychological, and psychodynamic perspective

Today, the church is ministering some marginalized communities which are disproportionately affected by poor health outcomes including psychological disorders. For example, minority communities have high morbidity and mortality rates for traumatic stress disorders. People who are members of a group that is stigmatized by mainstream society may be more vulnerable to psychological distress known as minority stress. This type of issue can occur due to internalizing stigmatization along with having poor social support and in some cases low socioeconomic status. More commonly people experience minority stress in response to being treated with discrimination and prejudice.

Many studies have shown that members of minority groups experience a high level of discrimination which causes physiological stress responses including symptoms

like high blood pressure and anxiety. The stress that stigmatized groups experience over time can lead to poor physical and mental health¹⁸.

The church should make every effort necessary to promote unity and reduce health disparities among ethnic and racial minority populations. However, the church is faced with the challenge of having limited resources to set up health facilities that would support such marginalized communities yet some minorities have mistrust in the current healthcare systems and programs. These barriers create a great hindrance to promoting psychosocial support programs in such marginalized communities and greatly hampered the success of the church in reducing the health disparities.

Community-based participatory approaches have been encouraged because they help community members to share knowledge equitably help resulting in effective community programs. Considering the commitment of the church in the suffering communities and the spiritual and secular leadership the church offers to the community, community-based participatory programs have collaborated with churches and ministers to implement psychosocial programs and other healthcare promotion programs.

The bottom line is that churches and religious leaders have a special role to play in identifying and addressing the social needs of various cultures and subcultures that form communities. When churches ignore the psychosocial challenges of the community members, the souls of the depressed and marginalized community members remain wounded without hope for healing and deliverance. The community members remain in the bondage of poverty, diseases, mindset-rigidity, substance abuse, hopelessness,

¹⁸ [1]

isolation, and rejection. Consequently, the church cannot thrive in such an evil environment nor will the minister get who to minister and receive the word of God. Therefore, the church is obligated to understand the social realities of the community so that it remains relevant to the people it serves. All church projects and programs should target the needs of the community members and should reflect what ministers are observing from the congregations. As a pastor, I have ministered in various Multi-cultural settings and I have realized the complexity of quenching the thirst of diverse communities using a single structure to address the cultural, racial, and sociological challenges in the communities. Diverse communities have different aspirations, norms and values hence it is not easy to call all of them and sit on one round table for negotiation on how to address the contemporary challenges. Some community members are plagued with a challenge of identity crisis because they cannot fit in the Majority groups and be recognized as part of the group. For instance, the youths who are born by minority parents cannot easily associate with other people of different colors and cultures. Not only is this problem ruining society but also it is complicating church ministry. It is reflected in the formation of church groups where people of the same color and race tend to form their own groups and leave others in isolation.

I encourage church pastors and other ministers to recognize the importance of bridging community gaps to avoid all forms of discrimination, segregation, social isolation and rejection such that no Christian can live lonely and helpless in case he/she needs people behind his back. In the book of Genesis chapter three, we read that God was intentional in realizing that the man was alone and needed a helper. He clearly said that man should not live alone but should be supported by the community and in response to this challenge,

God made a woman (Eve) to support Adam both physically and emotionally. Our purpose is to create different support groups that help the worries of anxious and frustrated Christians who are facing inner suffering such as isolation and social rejection. Anxiety is created when people decide to live in loneliness, separation, and a segregated environment because they have no one to relate with. The involvement of pastors in offering psychosocial support is important for the successful implementation of health promotion programs either the community-based programs or the faith-based programs that run through churches. Now reading about I learned that the idea of a group therapy is a process of collective problem solving based on interpersonal involvement. A process is something that unfolds over time¹⁹.

Pastors have a great social influence because they are role models to both the community and the congregation. This has enabled them to reach the deeper souls of their congregations and the other members of the large communities where they serve and because of their influence, people are willing to partake the pastoral advice. In such a context, the pastors are not only seen as ministers of God but also viewed as leaders both within the church and outside the walls of the church. The seeds of pastoral influence in promoting psychosocial service delivery is founded in the church history, the positions, and denominations of the pastors, and the divine connection exhibited by religious leaders. However, the level of psychosocial support offered to the people depends on the individual characteristics and the current circumstances faced by the pastors.

¹⁹ [2]

In promoting psychosocial service delivery, the church is a driving force in areas of education, activism for change, and health promotion. Pastors are the gatekeepers or custodians of social relationships in diverse communities and families. However, I have seen that the influence of pastors in promoting psychosocial services depends on their race and ethnicity. On the other hand, pastoral work is plagued by language barriers. From experience, people tend to listen to the advice or the teachings of a pastor who speaks their community language. The assumption is that a pastor who understands the community language can easily understand the psychosocial realities of his/her community and congregation and make authentic and genuine efforts to build community trust before he begins to exert influence. Besides, we should be cognizant of the stress associated with the pastoral work. Pastors have multiple duties to play within and outside the walls of the church and this poses a negative impact on their mental and physical health outcomes. Like the congregants, pastors need to be equipped with family support to reduce their stress such that they can effectively manage-work life balance. Clergies should also have healthcare programs to improve their physical and mental health. Retreats are not enough to improve self-reported stress or reduce depression scores among pastors. It takes a lot of effort to understand the depression and the stress that religious leaders such as clergies and pastors are facing to come up with effective clergy health-related programs.

3.4 Reflections for Support Groups

Support groups are the pillars of therapeutic interventions established by the church to support its ministers. People get therapy through intentional and health conversations held in the support group meetings. These conversations divert their cognitive processes to a better life-achievement goal. Most importantly, church ministers

and pastors find it more convenient to obtain therapeutic services through support groups because they contain people whom they share common challenges. I believe that without support groups, pastors can end up making irrational decisions that take them away from the trajectory of shepherding the sheep and take them to the worldly snares. This means that without these productive conversations, pastoral work is greatly ruined by their inner suffering. They cannot perform well in their ministerial work because they are not in good health, nor can they inspire any Christian to serve the healing God. There are many pastors who have lost track of their ministerial journey because of their rigidity to express their inner suffering to others. Retaining inner and emotional suffering creates loneliness and drives temptations into illicit acts such as substance abuse and suicide.

Putting emotional suffering aside, pastors are like any other human being. They can fall sick of common diseases such as pressure, diabetes, hypertension, fever, etc. I believe that holding health conversations with colleagues helps the great men and women of God to restore their hope in Christ's healing power and hold intercessions in a common accord for better health recovery of their colleagues. However, conversations and reflections of support group discussions do not provide immediate medications or answer the sick but they offer hope for a better tomorrow hence it is also important for pastors and church ministers to seek medical intervention. Besides, support groups provide a foundation on which ministerial conversations should be conducted in the church. For example, pastors in the Baptist churches promote the autonomy of the church through support groups that enable them to build long-lasting relationships and keep Christians at church for quite longer. In other words, support groups have been used as a foundation for retaining the flock in the church. I believe this is one of the ways through which pastors can further

establish their influence in the church. One of the pastors in a Baptist church said that “some of the pastors that have served this church before I got here served more than ten years and this is a great opportunity to maintain that kind of pastoral influence in the same congregation”.

The ability of the pastors to relate with the congregation and community members is the gateway through which our pastoral influence can be felt by the congregation. When we engage with the youth, the elderly groups, women groups, children ministries, choir members, and other support groups, we speak the message that captures the minds and the situations of those members and in return, they are able to conceive our messages for the betterment of their lives. The reverse is true since the relationship between the church ministers and the pastors during support groups is said to be reciprocal in nature. We all need each other for the betterment of our physical health and renewal of our inner hearts. Some support groups such as youth groups contain members who are more demanding/inquisitive hence they are likely to question the influence and the teachings of the pastor if they also see him in the same situational suffering as them. Compared to the adult congregation members, young people should be treated with a high level of consciousness. The manner in which pastors should express their physical and emotional challenges in front of young people should be ethical and non-provocative. Moreover, it is imperative to keep on holding traditional worship sessions alongside the support group for purposes of retaining and continuously engaging the older congregation members. Additional factors such as the size of the church, the geographical location of the church and the pastor’s gender should be put in consideration because they are believed to affect the relationships among the member of the support groups. For instance, a pastor who has

transferred from a rural setting to an urban setting should change his pastoral approach to certain issues so that he or she can easily associate with other members of the church and vice versa. The reason is that the dynamics of people in the urban setting are different from the dynamics of people in rural settings. Even the manner in which they respond to stressful situations is different. This means that the pastor has to change his/her pastoral approach to influence the church members to form viable support groups. The pastor's gender also affects his/her relationship and influence in the support groups. For example, one of my female friend pastors told me that she was forced to work extra harder and become a little bit flexible because of her congregational biases on female pastors. Some people are indoctrinated to believe that women cannot do pastoral work effectively. This stereotype is not new today. Even in the first century church, we see the Apostle Paul advice religious leaders to refrain from involving women in the leadership positions of the church (1 Cor. 14: 34). Some of the historical beliefs about women's roles create biases among the church members regarding the contribution of women to pastoral work. This forces the female pastors to work harder and put more effort to prove to the rest of the group members that they can also contribute to the social wellbeing of the church staff.

The reciprocal relationship between pastors and the congregation also affect their pastoral influence to the congregation and to the community. It is truly a type of crosspollination. Church members cannot take the advice of pastors to form support groups if they feel that the pastor treats them in a manner that does not correspond to their treatment to the pastor. The reciprocity of the relationship determines how pastors can be influenced by the psychosocial support offered by fellow Christians/congregants and other church members. I am one of the pastors who believe that our congregation has a great

impact on our lives. Our human needs are not different from theirs. Then why hide away from our congregation when we face inner suffering? With support groups, God uses different people to share different messages that touch each of the member's hearts. I believe that God can use a mere church member to change the heart of the pastor in the same way He uses the pastor to change the hearts of specific members of the congregation for particular reasons. If the pastor refuses to join support groups with fellow Christians, how will he understand the present needs in his/her communities and congregations? How will he then exercise his influence as a pastor or a church minister to find the necessary resources and solutions to address the challenges affecting the congregations? Similarly, how will the congregation associated with him other than listening to him on the pulpit? Pastoral work should go beyond pulpit preaching and evangelism and shift to the personal attachment. One on one engagements is more productive because they can change the hearts of the church ministers and the congregation concurrently. Even our Lord Jesus Christ could at least spend some evening dining with Christians, engaging them in social and spiritual discourses, and discussing various issues affecting humanity. In such meetings, Jesus was able to understand the suffering of his followers and sometimes He could perform miracles in the circumstance when there are no other resources to help the people. For example, the miracle in which Jesus Christ fed 5000 men with two fish and five loaves of bread. It is evident that if Jesus had not engaged with his followers as a group, he would not have disclosed that they had starved for long and needed an immediate solution to restore their ability to retain the teachings. In addition, Jesus Christ could utilize the available resources to change people's lives. Take an example of using soil to heal the sick; using water to produce wine; using the available stones to produce food. Without a

close relationship with people, they could not have believed and performed some of these miracles.

Similarly, Pastors and church ministers are not only influenced by God. They can also receive influence from elsewhere apart from God. In my ministry at The Flow Kingdom Ministries, I interact with people from diverse social settings with various perceptions, which subjects me to criticisms in some cases. Therefore, pastoral work cannot go without critics and stress. This kind of stress can influence our management approaches to pastoral work and potentially affect our relationship with members of the support groups. Sometimes, members of the congregation inspire us to work hard and meet their social challenges. Indirectly, they influence our understanding of community needs. As pastors, we must accept the fact that we don't "know it all" hence we should also depend on the congregation members and the members of our support groups to understand the lifestyle of the people and get ideas on how we can also help each other. The characteristics of our group members inspire us to use our influence and serve them appropriately. Our influence cannot be realized when we are also suffering in our hearts. This inspires us to be part of them so that they can understand our lifestyle and we also fit into their lifestyle. Secondly, we must have enough resources to support our pastoral work. If one of our church ministers has no food at home, then drop off some food to him/her. Prayer and faith without actions are dead. Sometimes church ministers can be depressed by lack of financial resources or failure to afford the basic needs of life. This inspires us to understand the cause of inner suffering and provide the relevant physical and spiritual support where necessary. One of my friends said that "I find myself donating my cars to some of the ministers because they don't have transportation to conduct pastoral work".

The connection of the pastors with community resources is also influential in their pastoral work when working with support groups. For example, if a pastor is a board member of the community hospital or highly connected with government and political officials, some members of the church, ministers and congregation members feel motivated to join his support group because their supplications will be easily forwarded to the relevant authorities easily. I have also realized that pastors need to have some level of education to bring some programs to the church otherwise those programs cannot thrive. This helps in bridging the knowledge gap between group management and the perceptions of the group members. Sufficient Knowledge Bridge the gap between the church and community resources necessary to address the challenges of the staff members and the congregation at large. In other words, pastors can take on additional roles and responsibilities outside the church activities if they have sufficient resources and knowledge to do so. In communities, pastors are often perceived as community leaders hence they not only play the spiritual leadership role but also participate in support groups at a community level to close the gap between the church and community resources. Similarly, when the available psychosocial support institutions are religiously competent, their activities are shaped by the matters affecting the people. For example, a nearby health center can integrate religious challenges into patient care. Support group meetings are some of the channels through which the community institutions can collect religious matters affecting the community members. In the aspect of life assessment, religion and spirituality should be integrated into healthcare. One of the important elements of religious competence is the ability of institutions such as hospitals, rehabilitation centers, and law enforcement centers to conduct assessments in a

sensitive manner and take appropriate clinical actions based on the collected information from support groups.

To enhance therapeutic support, pastors need to seek advice on how to talk to sick members about their social and spiritual lives. This would enhance therapeutic alliances creating a more holistic understanding of the religious views of the sick members. Similarly, therapeutic institutions such as psychosocial support centers, clinics, and rehabilitation centers must be open to spirituality and religion by recognizing the diversity differences. Such openness, curiosity, and wonder would underpin everyone's approach to the challenges affecting the church ministers and other members of the support groups. This implies that therapeutic practices must be backed by sensitive listening and closeness to the narratives of the patient with openness and respect for his/her spiritual or religious sensibilities. This kind of person-centered listening is called multi-channel listening. Positive results can be attained when the patient is asked probing questions such as who do you think understands your current situation? Where do you get comfort in your suffering? How are you coping in difficult situations? Where do you get hope when situations become difficult? These probing questions suggest that during conversations in support group meetings, therapists should focus on the self-reported information that can assist in promoting better health outcomes such as improvement in health behaviors, medical adherence, agency, and hope. At this point, pastors and church ministers have a great influence on encouraging and facilitating the participation of the congregation into support groups and other forms of the religious community. In addition, spiritual leaders intervene in the patient's healing process by engaging in spiritual practices and rituals or consulting the word of God to restore hope and create spiritual relief of the patient from the burden of

suffering. Therapeutic conversations do not stop at mere discourses but also go deep to confront the challenge or confront the various spiritual or religious beliefs that could be destructive to the mental health of the patients. For example, there are some people who still believe that psychological problems or mental health illnesses can be punishments from God. Such beliefs must be fully challenged so that they do not destroy or distort the thinking/perceptions of the church ministers. Elicit beliefs can make Christians lose track/focus on the journey to spirituality.

During support group meetings, I have acknowledged the importance of asking clear questions about the pastor's spiritual and religious beliefs, attitudes, and behaviors. Sometimes support group meetings become unproductive if some of the pastors continuously ask insensitive and judgmental questions to those who are suffering both emotionally and physically. Questions should be non-judgmental and sensitive to protect the safety of the victim during the conversational encounter. Once there is a clear lack of interest in the discussion, it would be imperative to change the topic. The pastor should be free to change or disengage the topic when he/she feels unsafe. At times, the church ministers and other members of the support group are coerced to discuss spiritual or religious suffering during the conversations. Such coercion is unnecessary and like any other therapist, pastors must ensure ethical engagements with the congregants. For example, if the pastor engages the survivors of clerical sexual abuse, such victims already have a negative experience with religion hence their perceptions/opinions should be respected and patient privacy should be highly protected. I believe that sensitive and empathic approaches to such emotional distress during the conversation will stimulate an appropriate response from the victims or from those to hold non-Christian views such as

the atheists who are sometimes isolated in mental health practices. When acting on the collected information, a sensitive therapist among the group members can integrate the religiosity of the suffering victim into an intercession plan or a mental healthcare plan and encourage the patient to always engage in sacred consultations and prayer if such approaches are the best source of their support and strength in mental health recovery. The patient's moral codes associated with his/her world view of the surrounding circumstances influence pastoral decision-making and behavior. For instance, if a group member is struggling with addiction to substance abuse, the church can come up with religious injunctions to help members on how to obtain from substance abuse. Such restrictions can help the church to realize its goals without conflicting interests. The patient can utilize the social and communal networks derived from the support groups to gather the necessary instrumental, emotional, and social support that would aid recovery. I believe if the church takes this trajectory to promote inner healing, even the surrounding healthcare institutions can collaborate with those support groups that are willing, open, and support to people who are living with emotional illnesses for the betterment of mental healthcare service delivery.

In summary, pastors and church ministers have a significant role to play in the healing of the suffering staff members. Through support groups and other Christian communities, pastors, church ministers, chaplains, or clergies can be integrated into the reality of the social challenges affecting the people. Subsequently, religiously inclined individuals with moderate and mild psychological distresses can be easily affiliated to the appropriate pastoral counselors, chaplains, and clergies for psychosocial support. However, spiritual support should not be substituted for psychiatric care although pastoral work can render invaluable assistance in various social aspects such as enhancing

community reintegration and uplifting people's morale. In difficult cases, the pastors and church ministers act as culture brokers because they mediate between the victim with the relevant healthcare teams especially in circumstances where the religious background of the patient appears to be influencing the patterns of service use in relation to path plasticity or the pathogenesis of the suffering. Above all, the communication between the support group members must be reciprocal to reduce stigma and build the capacity of all group members to express their innermost feelings to those whom they can confide-with. Pastors and church ministers are the first people to reach when people are experiencing inner suffering especially the ethno-culturally marginalized groups. Unfortunately, depending on the presented situation, the pastor may not have enough training or experience to deal with such a problem. At that moment, the pastor is obliged to seek the help of fellow pastors and church ministers to deal with the problem and combine efforts to ensure that their staff member is relieved from the burden of inner suffering. It is therefore imperative if all those who are committed to doing pastoral work also enroll for some short courses in therapeutic services and mental healthcare so that they are well prepared to identify the various causes of suffering and refer to appropriate therapists for appropriate services if they are unable to deal with the presented social challenges. I believe that pastors have a great position of prominence and influence in the congregation and in the community hence they should have the common humanity with those who they minister so that when a member of the congregation is experiencing emotional suffering, he/she is not stigmatized by the surrounding circumstances. The pastoral community/ support groups can assist in addressing complex issues that would not be managed by an individual pastor or church

minister particularly in people who have strong religious involvement and spiritual identities.

CHAPTER IV:

MINISTERIAL CAPABILITIES

The Assessments

4.1.1 as Theologian

One of the theologians with unmatched capabilities is Apostle Israel Peña who has been active in ministry since 1998. He completed his bachelor's degree in theology and has a Doctorate in Clinical Counseling through Revelation University as well. He is a published author with his first novel, "The Contaminated Rooms in a Sanctified House," which was released in 2016. His trip to Israel allowed him to connect biblical events with history and culture, thus expanding his knowledge of the doctrine even greater. He continues to excel in the area of theology and demonstrates a high level of revelation of the Word. As a Minister of the Gospel, he has had the privilege to enter into a synagogue and pray alongside a Rabbi because of respect that was given for the wealth of knowledge and history of the Word of God he presented during several interactions with this Rabbi. His pursuit in theology allows him to lead the Elders, Pastors, and congregation into an effective exegetical study of the Word every week.

4.1.2 as Preacher

Apostle Israel teaches and preaches every week with messages based on the foundational truths of Christian faith in spite of the present social and political pressures. His teachings and preaching apply to the lives of today while challenging the listener to incorporate a Christ-centered lifestyle that goes against societal norms. He draws in and captivates the audience, so people leave with an experience with God because of the Truth

of the Word and the way he presents it. He also shows the connection between the old and New Testament to establish congruence in the Word of God.

4.1.3 as Worship Leader

He teaches about prophetic worship and the importance of having the heart of worship. He can set an atmosphere of worship regardless of the obstacles that impede godly experience. He demonstrates with his life that worship is a state of being. He doesn't compromise the essence of worship for entertainment purposes. Candidate carefully screens the members of the Worship Ministry as and the songs presented by the team to ensure that his selections reflect scriptural truths of the Christian faith. He can blend into worship effortlessly while transitioning in and out of the Worship Ministry during the support service. The candidate should be highly sensitive to the worship environment.

4.1.4 as Prophet Agent

Apostle Israel Peña participated in mission trips to Cuba, Colombia, and Puerto Rico. He is an active member of the Citizens Police Academy in New York City. He is an active supporter of the "Not on My Watch" initiative, which deals with human trafficking and domestic violence. Through his affiliation with this initiative, Apostle Pena is recognized for discouraging online prostitution rings found in Craigslist.com and Backpage.com. He is the former Regional Director, and active member of U.C.S.N.Y. - United Chaplains State of New York. He currently serves on the board of Mount Sinai's Project H.E.A.L. Apostle Pena is used prophetically by God and lives a lifestyle that is always in constant connection with Holy Spirit. As a result, he has been used by God to bring a transformational but prophetic message to churches, cities, and regions.

4.1.5 As Leader/Apostolic

Apostle Israel Peña serves as Senior Pastor of The Flow Kingdom Ministries. When this church was established, he was given seven leaders with very limited experience and leadership skills to build this ministry with. As the Flow entered into its 5th year, the church had grown and leadership had nearly tripled with effective Elders and Deacons in the position to lead, as Apostle Israel continued to build them up. He has developed mature and knowledgeable leaders that can serve the community. Apostle Israel did not fail to promote growth within the church due to culture, race, age, or gender. As a result of his leadership skills, The 'Flow' has the leadership of both young and mature adults in the Pastoral offices who lead effectively and harmoniously despite their age differences. He has developed leadership in the areas of gifts, talents, and competency in various ministry departments. He conducts weekly leadership meetings to continue to motivate, disciple, and follow-up the status of ministry development. He has the ability to delegate responsibilities to those who are willing and capable within their scope of talent. Apostle Israel constantly shows gratitude and appreciation to his leadership. He provides leadership with effective and positive feedback on performance and spiritual development. A fruitful leader can be lead, and as such, Apostle Israel belongs to "The Timothy Team," overseen by his spiritual father, Bishop Tony Miller. This team of pastors is comprised of many men and women across the country who are Senior Pastors of their churches.

4.1.6 As Religious Educator

Apostle Peña gives an interactive bible study for the congregation every week. It is done this way because he desires to ensure that people understand what is being taught. Some of the topics of his teachings include dispensational truths, church history,

eschatology, and hermeneutics, which are not common topics of study for a church service. He has an awareness, sensitivity, and ability to teach audiences of varying cultures and ages. He can challenge one's way of thinking for transformation. His approach to challenge paradigms is not with disputing dogma or doctrine. His approach is backed with love, thus appealing to the hardened heart of man while invoking the Spirit of God to reveal and enlighten. He teaches that our relationship with God isn't just a vertical experience but a horizontal experience as well. Apostle Peña is very knowledgeable about human development and human behavior through studies of sociology and psychology. He created the discipleship class curriculum at The Flow Kingdom Ministries to introduce new believers to the foundational biblical principles and culture of the church. He teaches the Council of Prophets, Pastors, and Elders of The Flow regularly. Apostle Peña aspires to open a school of Theology at The Flow Kingdom Ministries.

4.1.7 as Counselor

Apostle Peña is a minister of reconciliation at The Flow Kingdom Ministries. He has provided countless hours of premarital, marital, post-marital, individual, and family counseling sessions. As a result of his fervor to counsel, he has led numerous amounts of people to reconcile their relationships with God, with self, and amongst each other. He shows great compassion and knowledge in these areas. Apostle Israel is very approachable and has an open-door policy. He is always willing to listen to pressing matters that occur in one's life. He aspires to one day open his counseling practice.

4.1.8 as Pastor

Apostle Israel serves as Senior Pastor of The Flow Kingdom Ministries. He serves with excellence, compassion, love, and integrity. He displays a Christ-like nature. He is committed to meeting the needs of the people and his leadership. He treats all those he encounters with love and attention without discrimination. He meets with new visitors after every service and offers them the opportunity to ask any questions they may have. Apostle Israel conducts deliverances as a means of soul care consistently. He demonstrates a character of benevolence, giving all he has monetarily and spiritually so that those around him can be blessed. As both a Senior Pastor and an active chaplain, he does hospital, prison, hospice, and home visits, He performs all ceremonial services such as Holy Communion, Baptisms, Matrimonies, and Funerals.

4.1.9 as Spiritual Leader

Candidate serves as an Apostolic covering to churches within the Tri-State area as well as international countries. He shares teachings, structure, and strategies to increase and strengthen these churches. As a true example of a great leader, he demonstrates good character in all situations. Apostle Israel is deeply involved in the soul care of his leadership. He regularly meets with members and leaders to observe and develop their spiritual growth. He supports and appoints sabbaticals for ministers and leaders on an as-needed basis. He goes on retreats and sabbaticals for spiritual recalibration. As one who has accepted the mantle on his life to developing strong spiritual sons and daughters, he also seeks out his spiritual father regularly as he continues to develop in his apostolic calling.

4.1.10 as Ecumenist

Candidate supports social justice through participation in programs like Citizens Police Academy and Not on My Watch initiatives. He is actively involved with the community and another clergy within the community. He has traveled locally and internationally to promote the gospel and shared his wealth of knowledge on the word of God. He has organized and participated in interdenominational meetings with church leaders to unite Bronx Ministers. Throughout his ministry, the candidate continues to reinforce the love of God to all souls regardless of belief, gender, sexual orientation, culture, or religion.

4.1.11 as Witness our Evangelist

Apostle Peña has disciple leaders in the area of evangelism by teaching biblical and approachable methods for successful outreach. He emphasizes the importance of compassion for souls and encourages evangelism daily. He challenges his leaders to invite one person per week to service. Apostle Pena partners with other churches and organizations (such as Lovey) in support of spreading the Good News. He participates in Missions trips to other countries. He sponsors children in Haiti with limited resources. Apostle Pena had the opportunity to present the Gospel to a group known as the Black Hebrew Israelites. While they became irate in defense of their own beliefs, Apostle maintained his posture in humility and love while displaying confidence in the truth of the Gospel.

4.1.12 as Administrator

Candidate meets weekly with the Elders of The Flow Kingdom Ministries to discuss realistic expectations, resources, and achievements as it pertains to the infrastructure of the ministry. He can identify and re-strategize objectives when the initial goals are not being met. He can discern one's ability to execute tasks, which results in assignments being completed within their allotted time frame and in excellence. He designed evaluation guidelines for each ministry to assess potential ministry candidates properly.

4.1.13 as Professional

Apostle Peña is wholesomely dedicated to serving the ministry, his staff, and the congregation with the utmost professionalism. In circumstances where ministerial promotions or demotions need to take place, he is consistent with his delivery and posture to all individuals despite the case by case scenario. One of the many reasons Apostle Pena is well respected and honored by the leadership is because he has demonstrated a professional demeanor during both favorable and unfavorable conditions. His posture remains unchanging, whether inside or outside of the church. His involvement with the NYPD has granted us a glimpse of his ability to separate Church and State.

4.2 Ministerial capabilities for development

4.2.1 Professional

The Professional's work in this project is to provide integral structure and order in the context of God's ministerial work. In this sense, as Director of the project, I have to avoid biases and try to provide solutions to the cases that are always presented during the

gatherings. Talk therapy allows people to express their emotional and spiritual burdens.

As a professional, my idea is to bring Bishops and leaders from other churches to talk about healthcare issues that affect religious leaders in their ministerial journeys.

I sought to collect the data about various issues that one can face in routine life. As a professional, I will consider the primary responsibilities that I should follow during routine life work. There is a need to develop certain techniques for bringing specific strategies that can help the pastors to deal with anxiety and other forms of emotional, physical, and spiritual suffering. These problems are not new; they were faced by Jesus when he was crying and weeping but God sent his angel by providing him with the basic therapy. I have noted that human nature that may suffer from various problems but cannot share them because of fearing public issues such as criticisms, rejection, oppression, harassment, and mockery. Professional counseling methods will be developed to attain positive results with religious leaders and church ministers.

Professional development in the pastors is necessary because it helps in the development of composite roles. Many pastors do involve in work activities relentlessly and in a fast-paced manner. A professional defines the ways to work with these pastors by utilizing those who are tasked with informational roles include spokespersons and office massagers/personal secretaries. The decisional role of the professional leader with managerial skills is to ensure efficient allocation of resources to the entrepreneurs, preachers, caregivers, mentors, and negotiators for the betterment of the work of God. These decisional roles maintain the appropriate ways on how to live as pastors working for Jesus such that we do not make decisions independently. The mentor facilitates all the established mentoring activities irrespective of the psychological issues that he faces while

working. A mentor should have proper mental health and capability to speak effectively and humbly to the followers. A mentor with a scattered mind will not be able to deliver the right message. Inner healing and deliverance is the only way to minimize problems like anxiety disorders if such a church minister is also facing mental health challenges.

John Piper in his book titled *“Brothers; We Are Not Professionals”* provides information that guides pastors and church leaders on how they should professionally manage the ministry. The author has provided evidence of a corporate mindset and gaps that are turning the minds. A professional seek understanding about various facts and experiences, but "there is no professional panting after God (Ps. 42:1)." In the case of inflexible professionalism, spiritual death cannot be stopped. The book indicates the type of professionalism required/expected from the pastors who are working for Jesus. "For there is no professional childlikeness (Matt. 18:3); there is no professional tenderheartedness (Eph. 4:32). However, some forms of professionalism have nothing to do with the Christian ministry. The problem of professionalism in ministry is endemic in pastors who do their work under the influence of the American dream (that indicates marketing-driven planning for businesses). The church is not a business, but there are some particular requirements such as financial resources that are needed for its growth. It should be noted that money should not be prioritized at the expense of Christ's ministry. The church is meant to help believers talk to Jesus through prayers, praises and worship but is not an avenue for selling the products. The professional church leader should flexibly understand his/her job and the associated life activities. What should be noted is that religious leaders are humans and have their needs like us.

Professionalism is also used to understand mature competencies and skills expressed by pastors. Skillfulness is a requirement to minimize the stress that pastors bear while doing their ministerial roles and responsibilities. It can further characterize the lives of church leaders who are dedicated to pastoral care ministries. Everyone needs professionalism for purposes of serving people effectively. On the other hand, competency is also required to effectively manage the health or the life of pastors. In addition to this, there is a need for maturity in doctrine and life.

According to Paul:

“Let no one despise your youth, but be an example to the believers in word, in conduct, in love, in spirit, in faith, in purity” (1 Tim. 4:12). A mature minister will want to treat every part of his life and ministry with the utmost spiritual care. He will keep a serious watch over himself and his doctrine (1 Tim. 4:16). He will strive to think, speak, and act *Coram Deo*²⁰.

The Apostle Paul implored Timothy to:

“Give heed to reading, exhortation, doctrine” (1 Tim. 4:13). Surely this is a call to be as professional as possible in our lives and in our study of God’s word and sound doctrine so that we might “rightly divide the word of truth” (1 Tim. 2:15).²¹

This implies that the maturity of the ministers including self-care and spiritual care is highly required for the smooth running of God’s ministry. Leaders should act as professionals in their life endeavors. The task of preaching the Wisdom of God in Pastoral

²⁰ Durenberger, G. P. (1992). Women in Church Office: Hermeneutics or Exegesis? A Survey of Approaches to 1 Tim. 2: 8-15. *JETS*, 35(3), 341-360.

²¹ Kimberley, D. R. (2019). 1 Tim 2: 15: A Possible Understanding of a Difficult Text.

Counseling needs professional skills. Good results can emerge out of peaceful insights shared between the counselor and the client. But it is also possible to yield negative results if ministers looking to give counseling services are not well trained. We should look forward to becoming intelligent and take guidance by considering the personality of the great women and men of God. We should also be proficient and act as professionals in the process of offering such specialized counseling services. This implies that priests should be looking through the Scriptures, perusing through guiding books and seeking knowledge from well-prepared and experienced ministers and advisors.

We must also focus on promoting Care in Ministry Structures and leadership Development programs. Regardless of whether the duty regarding the organizing and improvement of various services in a nearby church tumbles the seniors, elders or different individuals from the audience, the worshipers should give appropriate contemplation regarding such services. We can mistake on one of the different sides of the condition while thinking about the advancement and oversight of such services. From the derived perspectives, we can overemphasize the association and improvement of these services. On the other hand, we can underemphasize the requirement for wise systems and hierarchical structures of such services. By and large, holy places that are generally vocal about their inner healing and deliverance on conventional methods for facility service (for example, a service appropriately centered on the word, appeal, holy observances, and so forth.) regularly fall into the last error. David Prince, in his post "*Don't Theologize or Spiritualize Ministry Mediocrity*," addresses the requirement for ministers to practice extraordinary considerations in their oversight and information on the different services in their places of worship. The services cannot only be related to spiritual working, but these

are also required for the health of these ministries. Awareness of healthy exercises is another option to deal with mental sickness. He composes: In the event that a minister can't clarify how the worshipper's responsibility to the Word and the Gospel impacts how the congregation handles stopping, welcomes guests and makes declarations. At that point, that mirrors a reductionist and decreased perspective on the supremacy of the Word. When a decreased perspective on the supremacy of the Word plagues the worshipers, for the sake of being Word-focused, the outcome is that the audience frequently builds up a pompous, sacred cluster, self-supporting religious philosophy, that endeavors to spiritualize the absence of enthusiasm to experience the Word. Word professionalism linked with ministries requires mature, wise, thoughtful, skillful, and educated ministers. These are necessary for the pure spread of the word of God, as well as the administration of life matters. On the other hand, professionalism with consistent damage to the health of pastors due to inflexible operations creates spiritual harm.

The model of deliverance that will be suitable for these church leaders and staff will be "Truth Encounter." It is not about the sins but rather practiced for the Church ministers to bring their problems out. They will share the mental issues and other social problems for purposes of accepting inner healing and deliverance into their lives. The procedure will be to have a meeting at a place where these people can feel safe and have a direct conversation with psychotherapists about their problems. Eventually, they are able to meet a professional healer that will suggest strategies to reduce the level of inner suffering. The Support Groups will also understand the exhibited professionalism its impact on the growth of the Christian community. The Support Group will also learn about

the professional skills that are necessary to provide counseling and other mental healthcare services through flexible approaches.

4.2.2 Spiritual Leader

As spiritual leaders, it is necessary to communicate with the ministers, their certainty about the presence of God in their lives. Before the congregation enjoys a personal experience with the Spirit, ministers must experience Him within themselves first. The spiritual leaders balance their social and emotional conditions through support systems using extraordinary power. Ministers organize activities involving care for the people. The activities and discussions held in the Support Group improve the growth of every participant. The dedication of the social support system is one way to promote spiritual leadership skills. The primary purpose of the Support group participants is to engage themselves for spiritual growth and identify religious resources to facilitate their training and development of thoughts of the pastors towards mental healthcare. My responsibility is to manage those support groups with further sharing of the Word but not to seek their issues. The testimonies shared by these ministers in the group inspire others and effectively improve information sharing in the group. This strategy also helps in managing devotional prayer sessions with the participants and volunteers who are empowered to manage their prayers effectively. There is always a guided time for every task hence activities are managed with a high level of professionalism as indicated above. The prayer request of participants is accepted and the pastors are given an opportunity to visit specific churches and recruit pastors that would be part of the Support Groups.

The spiritual leaders have the power to listen to others actively. This helps them to manage the response according to the issues highlighted. The constant visit towards the

churches for meeting ministers helps them to get more information through effective listening. Confidence is also required for the support group to meet the challenges as the things need to be exchanged with confidence and trust. It the role of a spiritual leader to effectively manage support groups and promote confidentiality in all the discussions. Additionally, the pastors at church usually face a troublesome environment, but in the exercise of spiritual leadership, they should be provided with a level of humor that will help to reduce their stress consistency. The addition of humor may increase their confidence level to share things effectively. Integrity is another important characteristic that the Support Group ministers need to follow while having a face to face meeting with the pastors. Excellent listening will also help to diagnose the healthcare issues properly.

I have identified some critical roles of spiritual leaders. They lead others through their particular style to meet with God. It was one of Jesus's lifestyle that he never switched to other modes to tell His disciples about God's reality. Natural interaction is more attractive as compared to the guided and non-flexible styles. Spiritual leaders should have great generosity in spiritual leadership because they guide others to find a particular identity and purpose. The obstacles are reduced by these spiritual leaders due when they demonstrate a high level of generosity. When they confirm their identity, they develop a place where they can converge and take a stand against their personal challenges. The spiritual leaders play a vital role as the transformer not producers. They do set the goal for spiritual growth and health for positive outcomes because they have a passion for transforming the minds of followers. Transformation helps them to know their actual selves. The spiritual leaders are selective about their words and they do impact the social and spiritual well-being of believers through these words. The level of relationship and

status of interaction improves through direct conversations. These leaders assist followers in seeing old things in a new way. They set perspective and paradigm and inspire followers to understand old realism with new eyes. Jesus was known to be a carpenter's son, but afterward, Bartimaeus saw Him as God's Son. This is one way of seeing things from a different perspective. My Support Group will also maintain these roles that will bring positive outcomes.

4.2.3 Pastor/Shepherd

As a pastor, I have to engage other ministers on a personal level and minister to their various challenges and family situations. Through this project, I have to become a pastor to pastors providing resources and motivating the participating ministers to make use of them. The pastors care for the people in all types of conditions, including marriage, funeral, meeting people in jail, hospital, and at every holy place, they need to come and address the public for spiritual and Holy learning. They spread the word at every moment. I have to understand all these aspects as a pastor. I can interact with other ministries by having such a position. This can help me to find out the internal issues of these ministries, and I can suggest them for further treatment. One of the important tasks is to find out the real issues that will probably help to find out a particular medical diagnosis for issues like depression and panic attacks leading towards schizophrenia. The situation will allow me to become a pastor within these pastors. I will use certain resources to motivate the actions of these pastors.

One of the most definitive tasks for a pastor is to care for people who are members of their faith community. As a pastor, I had the opportunity to interact with the other ministers and minister to their various challenges and family situations. Through this

project, I had the great privilege of becoming, albeit temporarily, a pastor among pastors the resources and motivated sharing. People face troubles while living in a community; therefore, a safe place will be arranged to speak about issues. The pastors and church leaders may not like to speak openly; therefore, such a setting is necessary to develop a sense of belongingness. My social sharing will not be around the personal life investigations for the sake of meeting my personal interests but my goals are in favor of their mental health. Inner healing and deliverance can only be achieved through the effective diagnosis of their problems.

CHAPTER V:

IMPLEMENTATION, EVALUATION, AND TRANSFORMATION

5.1 Implementation

In Mathew, Jesus talks to his disciples about forgiveness as He said: "Seventy times seven-time" (18:22).²² It is about the internal relationship of the workers in the church. He used a boundless time of forgiveness. There is a point to understand; either one should have the ability to forgive others since lack of forgiveness increases depression and anxiety among church leaders and staff.²³ For purposes of managing inner suffering, I have identified some particular goals that would be evaluated to bring positive results.

There were several goals to begin this project. The first goal was to attain maximum cooperation and support for the church leaders and staff about inner healing and deliverance programs. The objective was to fight to heighten the urgency and develop a duplicable support system among leaders of the Flow Kingdom Ministries in the Bronx, which will ultimately help them deal with any suffering that may come their way. It was also a step forward to inform the pastors about the established support systems and the needs they have to discuss at any cost. Then, church leaders and staff members attend every formal session as they care for their problems and health because it is their calling and duty to do so. This will revive them about health and safety in ministry. The need for this urgency was found as an important aspect of the future support of the group. The reason

²² Francis, Pope. *Walking with Jesus: A way forward for the church*. Loyola Press, 2015.

²³ D., Raphael Kellman M. *The Whole Brain: The Microbiome Solution to Beat Depression, Anxiety, and Mental Fog without Prescription Drugs*. Da Capo Lifelong, 2017.

behind this goal was to organize deliverance conferences at the start of the year in which people should first see the light of God's healing power.

The second goal of my research was to recruit a team of volunteers who will assist me in running the various aspects of this support system and provide the spiritual support the participating ministers may need. For this, it was necessary to develop a brief manual/guidelines for the team and to recruit members according to the specified guidelines. The strategy was to train those individuals for practical involvement in healing and deliverance programs. My ultimate goal was to establish a center for the soul care of the church leaders and staff. Subsequently, there was a need to have a safe space for these individuals where they can be engaged in psychosocial support programs. These goals were developed for those church leaders and staff members suffering from various personal issues but are not aware of proper treatment options, therapies, and medication for their problems. In fact, anxiety, and depression not only destroying the disciples of Jesus Christ but also ruining their families.²⁴

One of the instruments that I have used for data collection to meet my goals was the survey questionnaire. The survey was conducted to capture the response of the selected Christian community members. I used population from various areas nearby The FLOW Kingdom Ministries in the county of Bronx. I selected 80 respondents who had direct relationships with The FLOW Kingdom Ministries but also going to another church in the county of Bronx. My aim was to collect the data and to represent it for setting further goals. The questionnaire was provided to the participants and they were guided on how to use it.

²⁴ What Intelligence Tests Miss The Psychology of Rational Thought? Yale Univ Pr, 2010.

They were free to express their answers since I was trying to collect true data to meet my goals effectively. I did not only stick to the questionnaire as the only instrument for data collection. I also collected various case studies where I have witnessed various psychosocial problems such as depression, anxiety, panic attacks, and emotional disturbances among the pastors and the strategies suggested to manage such psychosocial issues. The data was collected from 80 participants who had been actively working in churches including the disciples working in higher positions. All participants were actively involved in answering the questions. Ethically, participants were not tasked to disclose their personal information because of the need to address their privacy concerns. The summary of the analysis and results is discussed below and the details of the responses are presented in the Appendix section of this thesis.

Out of the 80 participants, almost 87% were male, and the rest of the 13% were female working on various responsibilities and roles in churches. The average age of the participants ranged from 18 to 36 years although senior pastors and Bishops were aged above 50 years. Bishops and senior pastors were recruited because of their vast experiences in serving various people with different diversities. They understood the desired aspects and goals effectively because of the responsibility they held during the response. I ensured that the questionnaire as simple enough to comprehend for all types of respondents. The respondents had different education levels although most of them (36%) had at least attained a Bachelor's degree. Out of the 80 respondents, 20 were from JHS / GCE 'O' level and 20 participants had attained a professional education. In addition, 60 members had spent at least five years of membership while about 30 members had attained at least ten years of membership in the church. Some of them had attained membership either by

birth or by personal interactions. About 10% became members of the church after the split while 12% became members out of the inspiration from others. The individual conversions inspired more than 50% of the respondents to join the church ministry. TV programs, including annual programs, also inspired many respondents to join the church. About 30% of the respondents were prayer warriors while 20% of participants were the direct members. The respondents selected The Flow of Kingdom ministry because it is among the charismatic and Pentecostal churches. On the other hand, 25% of respondents believed that it is a prophetic church. About 50% of respondents witnessed that The Flow of Kingdom ministry is practicing activities for inner healing and deliverance although it was not a routine activity. Besides, ten respondents were not sure about church activities. A few have recognized inner healing and deliverance as a routine activity at the Flow of Kingdom Ministry. Out of those who acknowledge that inner healing and deliverance is a routine activity, 50% of the respondents had observed this practice once in a month while 31% of respondents had observed it after a week.

Among the 80 participants sampled, 62% responded that they were not aware of the mental illnesses such as Panic attacks, depression, and poor self-esteem in their lives while 30% of respondents were aware of these illnesses. When they were asked whether they attended seminars related to inner healing and deliverance, 97% of the respondent indicated that they had attended such psychosocial support seminars. In fact, 75 respondents recommended that inner healing and deliverance activities should be followed strictly for pastoral mental health. This is one of the reasons for establishing such psychosocial activities within The Flow of Kingdom ministries.

Moreover, 45 respondents indicated that there is increased growth in the church and community because of the concept of inner healing and deliverance. These responses indicate that many participants were aware of the inner sickness that the church leader or the staff are facing in The Flow of Kingdom miniseries although few respondents had not observed such challenges. The respondents have indicated they would love to have such meetings for inner healing and deliverance once in a week while 30% of respondents were in favor of conducting church meetings once a month. In addition, 25% indicated that they would like to have such activities quarterly. One of the concerns expressed was the lower range salaries of the disciples as most of them indicated that they were getting less than \$2500 per month monthly. Such an income is a significant indication lack of sufficient funding and pastoral care. A few of the participants such as experienced/senior pastors indicated that they were being paid more than \$3000 monthly. This indicated the new pastors and church staff was not able to earn more than \$3000. This ultimately indicated the reason for lower-level growth at The Flow Kingdom Ministries.

5.2 Evaluation

The participants were provided with the questionnaire at the start of the Support Group meeting. The questionnaire was targeted at meeting the criteria of a healthy understanding of the users. These answers were not discussed with the participants although were guided on how to use the questionnaire and make appropriate responses. The identity of the participants remained anonymous due to the privacy concerns of the respondents.

I have evaluated one established group including a few workers while other support groups will be evaluated later because of time constraints. Evaluations are necessary

because they help us to identify the areas of improvement for the effectiveness of team meetings. One of the areas of improvement that I identified is to meet the pastors in their districts and establish strategies on how to maintain the attendance of the congregations. There is a need to design effective plans to promote these psychosocial support meetings. These meetings are at risk of getting rejected because of the negative attitudes of the pastors. Pastors do believe they are made for helping others hence they do not need any help. We need to develop consistency in the attendance of such pastors so that we can generate positive results. I can bring a change by developing idealized situations through flexible approaches targeting these pastors. It is necessary to evaluate every step taken before establishing the strategies such that the pastor is all integrated into the transformation process. Using written documents, it becomes easier to track the records of the attendees and make continue reviews for effective change management processes.

Some of the challenges identified include absenteeism of the investigator due to some reasons such as work demands. Therefore, I need to appoint a second person that can work in my absence. The assistant coordinator will work in my position whenever I am absent. This is the need for consistent administration of the meetings. The coordinator assigned should assess the effectiveness of the meetings and document the results. Monetary compensation is needed since church leaders should be directly provided with the health professionals to maintain some of the advanced therapies. Everyone should also be paid to maintain the attendance of the meetings and create more in this project. The necessary Funding requires proper planning and strategies of gathering the necessary financial resources because they are the real expenses involved when establishing meetings, gathering the necessary materials and resources, and meeting healthcare

professionals. The monetary flow needs to be arranged to keep this developmental project effective.

Furthermore, the meetings should also include activities not only for pastors but also for their families. The aim is to gain a deeper understanding of the social life of the workers (church leader and staff) and help them derive the importance of these meetings by allowing them to come with family. The behavioral change is the primary goal that needs to be observed after every meeting. Timely assessment should be conducted with the results obtained and these assessments can be collected use a proper rating scale. Pastors have indicated that they need to have such meetings in private places. They only agreed to tell their frustration in private places. They were ready to share their personal problem but they were not willing to shed light on such problems because of the privacy concerns identified in the community where they were living.

A few pastors were in favor of these meetings if they take place in the right platform where they are able to narrate their sufferings and get proper therapies. The community can be changed into the therapeutic community based on the issues being handled. The church leaders and staff were happy with my initiative and they expressed gratitude for the knowledge and the support availed to them. Lack of enough resources is one of the key challenges hindering the progress of such pastoral care meetings in many churches today. Most of the churches are getting limited financial support hence they do not have enough financial muscle to conduct such daunting ministerial duties.

5.3 Transformation

The behavioral transformation was the desired goal in this dissertation. The project created greater awareness and a sense of empathy among the chosen members including

men and women who participated in the meetings. The awareness glorifies our God in heaven. I have understood the situation of various pastors for this only this evaluation period. My knowledge about mental sicknesses/disorders and other related social, emotional, and physical suffering experienced by pastors has significantly improved. I now have a positive attitude about the different therapies used to control these disorders. This project has also helped me to find out various other ways that can work to improve the pastor's situation. The current exercise has motivated me to participate more in such activities and spread awareness about the emotional, social, and spiritual needs of the church staff members and church leaders. The shared personal situations have given me a chance to deeply explore the inner feelings of the great women and men of God when they are experiencing emotional suffering. I can understand the words that I should share when one of the staff members is experiencing emotional, spiritual, social and physical suffering. To study things and to make experiments give us different experiences. Practical working gives more chances to learn although it is a time-consuming task to observe pastoral work in relation to Biblical analyses. I have found that independent working create an opportunity to assess different issues independently and generated independent conclusions.

The project provided me with live examples and experiences, and it has transformed my thoughts and personality. As a senior pastor, I now understand the impact of integrating formal teaching components into inner healing and deliverance ministry. The inner healing and deliverance knowledge derived from the meetings have released me to grow in Christ's likeness because these concepts have been introduced in The Flow Kingdom Ministries to address issues that keep on surfacing in the ministry all the time. I have noted that internal

healing and deliverance should be used as a counseling center or the church's 'medical' unit that creates avenues for pastors and church ministers to express their deeper issues. I am now dedicated to taking ministry forward because I have developed a strong preference for inner healing and deliverance ministry since it covers the life issues and identity challenges faced by believers. Formal and specialized healing and deliverance meetings have created a difference in my life in four aspects. They have enabled me to build my faith in the power of prayer ministry. They have also helped me to identify the root cause of the suffering and how I should deal with such causes hence I now experience freedom in my ministry. John 8:32 says that when we know the truth, Truth will set us free. Most importantly, the ministry has brought the desire and the awareness to receive personal healing first before I extend healing and deliverance to the congregation. The knowledge gained from the conducted meetings keeps me from the snares of this world for a quite long period. When the word of God got entrenched in my vessels, I was set free from non-submissive and proud behaviors. I am no longer quarrelsome, arrogant, careless, and confronting other church ministers and pastors. This is attributed to the formal teachings and prayer encounters that I have had with my pastor colleagues. Such knowledge is a great foundation that God has created in me to address all the social, spiritual, physical, and emotional challenges related to my life aspects. Subsequently, I now move in a sanctified lifestyle and I am a role model to many pastors and other members of the congregation in The Flow Kingdom Ministries and even in communities. Inner healing and deliverance accompanied by formal teachings have helped me to understand better ways through which I can live in harmony with the entire church leadership and my group members in social support groups. I am no longer a victim of demon centeredness because I have the

capability to deliver myself from demonic principalities because of being ministry dependent nor do I take personal ownership of spiritual growth.

Inner healing and deliverance sessions have turned into my greatest teacher because they have kept on melding knowledge with real-life experiences supported by practical healing and formal preaching. Subsequently, I have developed a culture of being personally responsible for my divine actions and decisions, which is a symbolic representation of my growth and maturity in Jesus Christ. These are the fruits of supplementing formal church teachings with inner healing and deliverance services. I now feel good with a firm foundation of the Truth and God's word. The Model of inner healing and deliverance offered at The Flow Kingdom Ministries is unique in a context that offers both ministry and formal teaching to resolve the believers' spiritual, social, and emotional needs and build a firm foundation for their growth in discipleship. It covers the soul, the body and the mind hence the whole person is empowered to counter-attack the worldly challenges that are blocking the relationship with God. Besides, I can now separate or differentiate between the lies and the truth because I no longer carry destructive mindsets. Inner healing and deliverance sessions have helped me to acknowledge that suffering in pastoral work is not brought by sin but is allowed by God to deepen and strengthen our faith in Him. In other words, the meetings we have had corrected my understanding of God and his realities hence deepened my faith in Him. I am now attentive to any kind of suffering that comes in my way and am fully empowered to take personal responsibilities to transform and grow myself in Christ. Prayer ministry has established truth in suffering and enabled me to establish a new godly foundation for life change leaning on the power, goodness, and love of God to bring inner healing. I am no longer holding any ungodly belief hence I have no

bondages and strongholds from my past entanglements established by the world and satanic encounters. The ministry has set me free to receive Christ and embrace God almighty through intimate relationships with Him hence I now fully trust and obey Him. I am now enthusiastic about pursuing God and staying in a righteous relationship with Him. Through prayer ministry and persistent healing and deliverance services, I am now a changed creature who is committed to promoting spiritual growth through strong, meaningful, and healthy relationships with fellow great women and men of God. I now live a God-centered life supported by the purposes, priorities, beliefs, and values of God's Kingdom hence suffering is overcome by persistent dependence on God's love and goodness.

CHAPTER VI

PASTORAL SUFFERING THEOLOGY BASED ON THE EXPERIENCE

The existing evidence collected from my personal encounters since I started the pastoral work indicates that pastors face considerable resistance as they seek to implement the suffering reformation in their pastoral work. In fact, the current evangelical church has failed to proliferate the world because it struggles with capturing and retaining allegiance to the congregants. Suffering in all its forms ruins the collective morals and spiritual health of church ministers and pastors. It compromises their access to divine power because it does not allow intermediation between man and God. It is also important to note that suffering thrives in a fallen creation. For example, when the pastor's emotional or mental health is not in good condition, if he does not get the help of counselors, he/she is likely to have a predisposition that God is connected to his/her psychological and emotional health. Consider the scriptures such as Psalm 88:18, which says, *"You have caused my beloved and my friend to shun me; my companions have become darkness"*. This scripture literally means that darkness is my only friend I have; perhaps God has abandoned me. Even in the book of Job chapter 3:11; 16-17, Job laments that *"Why did I not die at birth, come out from the womb, and expire? Why was I not as a hidden stillborn child, as infants who never see the light? There the wicked ceases from troubling, and there the weary are at rest"*. Like Job, Prophet Jeremiah also laments in his suffering: *"Why did I come out from the womb to see toil and sorrow, and spend my days in shame?"* (Jeremiah 20:18). Some of these scriptures indicate that when pastors experience suffering from any kind of stressors, the first blame is shifted to God in the form of lamentations, regret, or complaints. This creates a gap between God and the Pastor/church ministers. Subsequently, the great men

and women of God are forced to start doubting/questioning God's ability to change things around them.

I believe that poor emotional and physical health is part of human experience, right away from the creation of the Universe. In Genesis chapter three, we read that Suffering was given to humanity for payment of his sins. However, not all suffering symbolizes sin. If we believe that we are suffering because we have sinned against God, we are bound to go off track in the path of salvation. Some suffering happens to us because God wants us to acknowledge his presence amidst us. Unfortunately, human expectation of living a life free of sicknesses and other forms of physical suffering has increased because of advancements in medical science and technology. It should be noted that the bible also recognizes some of the diseases that we suffer as Christians. Some of the biblically recognized diseases include; Tapeworm in Acts 12:23; leprosy (Mark 1:40; Matthew. 8:2); infirmity (John. 5:5); epilepsy (Matthew 17:5); indigestion (1 Timothy. 5:23), hemorrhage (Luke 8:42-48), dysentery (Acts 28:82; Chronicles 21:18); dermatological diseases (Leviticus 13) among others. Does it mean that all people who had suffered these diseases had sinned against God? Obviously no! To assist those pastors and church ministers who are experiencing any form of suffering whether physical, emotional or social suffering, the Christian community, including pastoral care ministers, should first understand the meaning of suffering and the kind of hope/Christian message that it conveys to the suffering man of God.

First of all, suffering involves both the spirit and the body. In other words, it covers the entire person and this is a reason as to why it is always characterized by physical

symptoms, guilt, stress, fear, and other forms of emotional distress. In other words, during inner suffering, the victim sees his/her wholeness being threatened by the surrounding circumstances and this point, he/she need to first understand the meaning of suffering. It is the role of those who are involved in the pastoral care ministry to assist the victim to understand the meaning of suffering and prove to him/her that suffering is the call to ministry but not divine retribution. Even our Lord Jesus Christ suffered by experiencing pain, powerlessness, and death. This means that the Holy Spirit understands the needs of those who are experiencing suffering and He is willing to share their suffering in compassion. The pastoral care ministers must understand the sufferer as a unique, complete, and spiritual human being. This would enable the great women and men of God to assist the victims to transcend suffering and derive its explanation in the context of revelation and faith. In chapter three of this dissertation, we have acknowledged that caring ministers must be the friend to the person suffering and must accord him/her maximum respect, love and tenderness simply because he/she is entitled to such protection and care. Pastors who experience inner suffering and experience such care from other pastors or church ministers will be in a better position to value themselves in ethical and moral terms. They are also able to feel the sense of belonging and oneness with Christ during their trial moments and ultimately triumph over death and suffering.

"Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace, whose mind is stayed on Thee."²⁵

The kind of Suffering experienced by the great women and men of God takes many forms including spiritual suffering, emotional suffering, physical suffering, and social

²⁵ All biblical references use the New International Version unless otherwise noted.

suffering. In this, we explore the meaning of these four forms of suffering and how they manifest in pastoral work.

6.1 Spiritual suffering

The word spiritual is about to lose meaning because it is sometimes under defined or overused. In the current healthcare journals and popular media, everything spiritual is associated with craziness or satanic. It is our role as pastoral counselors and chaplains to seek nurture and welcome the ministerial responsibility of caring for the entire person i.e. the body, the mind, and the spirit/soul. However, we currently lack a common definition of what is needed/expected or constitutes something ‘spiritual’. If we who are involved in pastoral care ministry fail to define the meaning of something ‘spiritual’, then the world is bound to define it and unfortunately, it will define it wrongly. The world view of the term ‘spirit’ rotates around the human spirit. The true meaning of the word ‘spiritual’ is those human capabilities that uniquely distinguish us from the rest of the people in the world. Therefore, we need to go beyond ourselves so that we can have a good relationship with God. The unique qualities that we possess help us define who we are and what constitutes our lives. Regardless if human beings believe in God or not, all humans are spiritual beings. This means that there something that makes a human body more than just the sum of physical body parts. The spirit/soul, body, and mind combine to form a human being. Although it is difficult to fully comprehend one’s spirituality, it is important to keep working towards understanding people's spirituality so that we can serve according to how we are called. The foundation for spiritual suffering must be defined so that pastoral caregivers are precise and complete in their caregiving.

Spiritual suffering is based on the humanistic need of any individual, including love, virtue, hope, faith, and beauty. One can face spiritual suffering when the requirement of such things is not being fulfilled. Spiritual suffering of pastoral and church leaders also involves unfulfilled needs necessary to effectively conduct their pastoral work and these spiritual needs stimulate mental illness. The bible says "*Worn out from groaning; all night long I flood my bed with weeping*" Ps 6:6 (KJV).²⁶

This indicates peaks of depression that is not expressed by the church leaders. This depression is caused by social reasons such as lack of affection from others about the encountered issues, lack of help from the pastoral care ministers, among other reasons.²⁷ Amidst these challenges, the churches always continue their mission for spiritual healing but those managing prayer ministries for others also need appropriate care. Spiritual suffering among the pastors and clients is one of the reasons behind the increased depression and anxiety.²⁸

Mathew Meyer in the article, "*Practical Dimensions of Spiritual Growth*," indicates the various approaches through which the church can promote the spiritual growth of the church leader. These dimensions include Bible study, prayer sessions, regular devotional time, music, paying attention to positive aspects, and personal development.²⁹ He also recommends the act of performing meaningful rituals for minimizing psychological stress.

²⁶ Psalm 6:6 New International Version (NIV)

²⁷ Detweiler, Craig. *Gods: How Technology Shapes Our Spiritual and Social Lives*. Grand Rapids, MI: Brazos, 2014.

²⁸ D., Raphael Kellman M. *The Whole Brain: The Microbiome Solution to Beat Depression, Anxiety, and Mental Fog without Prescription Drugs*. Da Capo Lifelong, 2017.

²⁹ Geftakys, George. *Spiritual Warfare*. Fullerton, CA: Torch and Testimony Publications, 1991.

The predominating structures of most of the churches have worked for promoting inner healing.³⁰ Church leaders are human beings like any other person hence suffering and sickness are routine happenings in their lives. They bear the stress of followers and their personal stress too.³¹ This increases their level of suffering.

A doctor works for the patient but also suffers similar problems. Likewise, a church leader working for others may face similar stresses that the common man suffers. If a common man can have such rehabilitation therapy to overcome the stress, then a pastor as any other human being can also utilize such therapies and get healed. No matter how common these suffering will be, it will always be strange for others to observe a pastor with similar issues. How strange is it? A common man thinks about the sickness of pastors but he never thinks about the disclosure of such sufferings in front of another pastor.

If a church leader listens to others with patience and arranges to pray for them why should he become nervous when disclosing his problems? The problems were consistently happening but they can be controlled through therapies and operative procedures.³² This indicates the spiritual suffering also requires proper techniques to combat its stressful impacts. Many times, St Peter and Paul preached about the problems and sicknesses and emphasized the need to have resilience among the believers. They revealed Christ's greater intentions for humanity in their apostolic Letters and missionary work. In the New Testament, we see the reflections of pastoral, spiritual suffering, and instructional messages/pieces of advice to overcome these spiritual burdens as reflected in 1 Peter 5:1-

³⁰ Stedman, Ray C. *Spiritual Warfare: Winning the Daily Battle with Satan*. Grand Rapids, MI: Discovery House, 1999.

³¹ Gray, Andrew. *Spiritual Warfare*. Boston, MA: Eliot, 1720.

³² Taylor, Jack R., and Raps Robinson. *Spiritual Warfare*. Fort Worth: Fulness House, 1979.

4; Luke 22:31-32; 1 Peter 1:3-7; 1 Peter. 4:12; 1 Peter. 1:6-7; Romans 5:3-4; James 1:3-4; 1 Peter 3:17-18.

In pastoral work, spiritual suffering arises when the pastor's spiritual needs are not addressed. The real suffering begins at a time when the pastor no longer trusts and believes in everyone around him or he has lost beauty in his/her life. Spiritual suffering becomes severe when the pastor or a great man or woman of God has lost hope. At this point his/her spiritual needs are not attended to or they are threatened by the surrounding circumstances. The expression of inner pain is a true indication that the pastor's inner soul is completely hurt or injured. Spiritual suffering also threatens the pastor's purpose and beliefs in life. This is different from physical suffering which simply threatens mobility and leaves other functions.

From my experience, spiritual suffering is usually felt as spiritual dissonance which exists between the pastor's faith in God and the hurting circumstances happening in his/her life. In most cases, we experience spiritual suffering in those complex situations when we cannot find any source for life meaning, peace, hope, love, connection, strength and comfort from anywhere around us. In our pastoral work and our calling to offer spiritual care, we must acknowledge the manifestations of spiritual suffering and work hard to seek support from other great women and men of God for healing. Otherwise, the spiritual reformation of great women and men of God towards being mature in Jesus Christ can be hindered by the unfulfilled inner struggles, emotional hurts, footholds, spiritual oppressions, and ungodly beliefs predisposed in their minds among other entrenchments.

As a senior pastor, I now recognize the significance of addressing the spiritual needs and the inner lives of the church ministers to overcome deep-seated hurts and

spiritual roadblocks in their ministerial journey such that they can drive to maturity in Our Lord Jesus Christ. I confess that over the past years, I have grown to maturity in Christ and experienced healing in my inner feelings of isolation and abandonment than in those days when I had not joined God's ministry. The whole body including the spirit, the physical body, the soul, and mind are interconnected and the pathway to my heart are widely open. Through support groups and participation in Christian communities such as intermittent counseling sessions, consistent prayer meetings and bible study groups, I can now experience a secure sense of belonging and feel no spirit of isolation or rejection. Each of the social groups helped me in growing into maturity in Christ because I settled for learning and got acquainted with the meanings and explanations of spiritual suffering from various perspectives.

In some churches, the evangelical/ disciple structures still lack the ministry of pastoral care and healing of inner hurts that are usually experienced by the great women and men of God. Usually, all believers experience suffering although at varying levels depending on one's spiritual maturity and his/her life trajectory. Some scholarly works also agree with me on lack of pastoral care ministries. For example, Dan Glover and Claudia Lavy in the "Discipleship in the Real World" acknowledge the need for one-on-one ministering to the struggles, inner suffering, and spiritual oppressions experienced by the great men and women of God. In the same accord, Shirley Chris in *"It Takes a Church to Make a Disciple: An Integrative Model of Discipleship for the Local Church"*, explain the basis of designing discipleship in the church under three main building blocks namely; platform, practice, and paradigm. The practice frame is associated with ministry, teaching, worship, fellowship, and evangelism. In other words, Shirley acknowledges the need for

people to get involved in pastoral care ministry and recommend that it is the role of the church leaders to create this opportunity. The paradigm frame recognizes two main aspects i.e. loving one another and living in Christ. Loving one another means that great women and men of God should build lasting and loving relationships amongst themselves so that they unite with the body of Christ. Living in Christ means that there is a need for establishing a loving relationship with Jesus Christ. On the other hand, the platform frame requires deeper involvement of the great men and women of God into ministerial practices such as personal relationships through coaching and mentoring one-on-one relationships, covert learning; shared leadership, community building, targeted learning and systematic discipleship; promoting spiritual growth in homes, equipping children and parents with discipleship knowledge; community outreaches, evangelism programs, mission teams, deacon ministry, celebration of ordinances, and worship services. Despite the existence of these comprehensive practices in many churches, nothing is mentioned about healing the inner suffering and addressing the struggles of believers. Where is Christianity in all these practices?

Christianity is a set of propositions such as symbols, beliefs, and doctrines that make cognitive assertions and facts about the reality of Christians. We become Christians by assenting and memorizing the truth expressed in Christ's teaching. Matthew Meyer highlights the various activities through which Christianity and spirituality can be developed in one's life. These activities include studying the bible, becoming a member in various Christian communities, listening to gospel music, sharing faith with others, fasting with fellow Christians, expressing faith in ministerial work, performing meaningful rituals to God, paying attention to dreams, reading good inspirational books and engaging

spiritual friends. However, all these methods do not involve internal healing and deliverance to resolve the unattended struggles and spiritual needs in the deeper feelings of the great women and men of God. Currently, the disciple structure of some churches concentrates on building Christianity by asserting and memorizing their truth without paying much attention to the inner healing. Subsequently, many Christians including pastors and church ministers have ended up struggling with spiritual oppressions which greatly hinders their intimate relationships with God. I have also noted that some Christians' spiritual growth has been blocked by moral failures affecting their ministry, career, and lifestyle. With these roadblocks in the trajectory and the drive to maturity in Christ, pastors and church ministers cannot raise inspirational leaders that would touch the inner souls of those who are experiencing spiritual suffering despite the wide range of activities conducted to promote discipleship and Christianity. Spiritual healing and deliverance are a great foundation of discipleship and ministry in the spiritual formation of the pastor's growth in Christ. This would help the spiritually oppressed to always encounter God's love in their lives despite the difficult times they might be facing.

6.2 Emotional suffering

Emotional suffering is direct damage to mental health, which is an outcome of emotional distress. The actions of others can also result in emotional harm. Other prominent reasons are anxiety, insomnia, depression, humiliation, and torment and anguish behavior.³³ Scholar argues about the basic parts of human being including body and mind. Emotional sufferings are due to the mind and thoughts the human beings feel while

³³ Kinsman, Kat. Hi, Anxiety: Life with a Bad Case of Nerves. New York, NY: Dey Street, 2017.

observing various situations. There has been indicated the response of the pastors while they were facing trouble; they have asked for privacy. It is showing how much they are concerned about their thoughts.

John Danforth expounded broadly on the passionate territory of Jesus in his editorial on the Gospel of Mark.³⁴ He investigated and guarded the passionate response of Jesus as evidence of his humankind and not as an indication of a defective being. He started by saying, "We have seen that our Lord recently placated with the dread of death; however, as he currently faces eye to eye with allurements, this kind of assault is known as the start of agony and misery."³⁵ Jesus was uncovering his sentiments and the anguish he was encountering emotionally with the likelihood that his supporters could see him. The author keeps saying, "Here we surmise that the genuine trial of goodness lies in the start of the fight; since it is there in the shortcoming of the tissue, which was recently covered up, where mystery emotions plentifully appear."³⁶ It is unequivocally why a few people distinguish Jesus as being defective and contemptible of being viewed as equivalent to God. Individuals who protect this idea ask themselves, how would God be able to respond in such a disruptive and wild way?

³⁴ Danforth, John C. *The Relevance of Religion: How Faithful People Can Change Politics*. New York: Random House, 2015.

³⁵ *ibid*

³⁶ *ibid*

Bernstein et al. accept that considerable emotions and intellectual responses are the aftereffects of our association with our folks, particularly our mom. In this specific case, Jesus didn't originate from what we think about an ordinary household structure.³⁷ Jesus

During my Pastoral Clinical Education preparation, I discovered that church staff and leaders must figure out how to utilize words that have a unique, strange significance to sufficiently depict patients. As a psychological exercise, I put down creatively with Jesus to discuss how He felt in Gethsemane. The discourse would happen as follows: - Me: How are you? - Jesus: I'm having the most noticeably terrible day of my life. - Me: I'm so grieved. Might you be able to mention to me what's happening? - Jesus: I don't have the foggiest idea of whether I can do it. I have been planning during the current day for quite a while. In any case, I didn't realize I was going to feel stressed. - Me: What do you mean? - Jesus: My dad enlightened me regarding this, yet I don't have the confused idea of whether I can satisfy what He requested that I do. It is simpler to see things from my honored position of brilliance. Besides, coming to earth and encountering this is a lot of more regrettable than I had foreseen. - Me: I think you feel disappointed, yet let me know how you would feel. - Jesus: Are you certain you need to know how I feel? Is it true that you are certain you can stand reality? - Me: I don't have the foggiest idea, yet I will attempt. - Jesus: Very well, at present, I feel deceived, stressed, powerless, thoughtless, overlooked, edgy, baffled, squashed, desolate, distanced, pulled back, disconnected, disillusioned, melancholy, in torment, in enthusiastic disarray, with my heartbroken, daunted, miserable,

³⁷ Lowe, Frank. *Raised by Unicorns: Stories from People with LGBTQ Parents*. Jersey City, NJ: Cleis, 2018.

in torment, hurt, overpowered, defenseless, caught, unsettled, disheartened, crushed, restless, disturbed, exasperated, inept, corrupted, worn and depleted. - Me: I can feel it.

Jesus is sharing the emotional feelings and suffering with the followers.³⁸ It is quite simple and realistic to share the issues for reducing their impact over life. I have learned many things, including the reality of nature and its direct connection with the mind. I feel satisfied with the things and make reactions over ordinary approaches. This is what I am, but everyone may not have a similar nature like me.

The most significant thing assemblies can do to make a sheltered situation for their minister is to establish a domain where getting help isn't just adequate, however, anticipated. An emotional health checkup like clockwork (or significantly more as often as possible) with a prepared, experienced Christian advisor would be an extraordinary thought. In case, if your minister is hooked, include a marriage and family mentoring session at any rate. The entirety of this goes far in disposing of the shame identified with legitimate mental and passionate wellbeing. Along these lines, in addition to the fact that you should want to help your minister here, as a feature of his gathering, you have a duty to help forestall or mend misery in your minister. The following are a couple of ways you can do this.

Like spiritual suffering, emotional suffering is part of human experience because it accompanies various real-life continuums such as agony, ecstasy, despair, hope, sorrow, joy, lament and praise, faith and doubt, morning and celebration. First all, we must

³⁸ Begley, Sharon. *Can't Just Stop: An Investigation of Compulsions*. New York: Simon & Schuster Paperbacks, 2018.

acknowledge that Christians experience both negative and positive emotions. In the book of Galatians 5: 12 - 26, Apostle Paul presents a list of only positive fruits in one's life but when we follow his Christian ministry, we acknowledge that he underwent some negative emotional experiences and spiritual movements.

For many believers, the world has a list of socially acceptable Christian emotions. Subsequently, when the Holy Spirit invites those believers into the spiritual formation through emotional suffering, they experience states, thoughts, and emotions that they understand as bad, sinful, wrong, and unacceptable. For example, the tears expressed over the death of Lazarus and the agony expressed by believers in Gethsemane present some of the kinds of negative emotions that believers suffer. Bad thoughts and emotions are very devastating to one's life. Jesus presents a living example in the context of the pastoral work of caregiving. He expresses sorrows acquainted with abandonment, betrayal, pain, and grief hence referred to as the Man of Sorrows because of experiencing jealous longings, groaning and deep pain. Sometimes, Jesus' manifestation of emotional suffering challenges our assumption about God and his deliverance power. In other words, when looking at Christ's suffering, it becomes clear that our suffering is because we are created in God's image hence we must be Christians to fulfill God's call for transformation and renewal of our minds. In this case, cognitive reconstruction requires those involved in pastoral care to help those who are experiencing emotional suffering to view God in the context of the Man of Sorrows, the suffering Jesus and Holy spirit instead of viewing God through the spectacular lens of his attributes.

The inclusion of emotional suffering during spiritual formation and reconstruction is necessary to remove the wrath of God especially during the atonement moment. As the

atoning sacrifice, Jesus Christ had to shed his blood for the remission of worldly sins to meet the requirements of righteousness. When such agony is contextualized in this light, human emotional suffering becomes different from the same kind of emotional suffering that Jesus Christ experienced. It implies that the purpose of encountering emotional suffering is to sacrifice our sinful nature to God hence human nature may not represent a true image of God. In other words, God is made to be perceived as transaction, wrathful and punitive God when certain aspects of Jesus Christ suffering and the emotional suffering experienced by epistles and prophets are used to reflect our real-life suffering.

When the great men and women of God are experiencing several emotional suffering such as depression and other stress disorders, it is imperative to conduct immediate assessments and take appropriate clinical interventions. Otherwise, severe emotional distresses are likely to result in self-harm and suicidal attempts. Clinical interventions to stress disorders should be highly prioritized over other religious interventions and the patient must be offered adequate inpatient care. In so doing, pastoral care ministers are believed to have delivered compassionate care to approximate the status of Jesus Christ when delivering compassionate care in the valley of shadows. Other appropriate interventions to the emotional suffering victim include seeking justice in the existing justice systems as well as building his or her faith in God. For example, some of the causes of emotional suffering stem from criminal acts inflicted on the victim such as rape, sexual abuse, felony assault, intimidation, and threats. Both the victim and his/her family members need justice and must be taken to relevant advocacy groups for their justice to prevail.

Formative experiences in pastoral work are important in circumstances whereby the great men and women of God are experiencing emotional suffering because their rights have been violated or abused by others. The blind obedience to medical administration in such circumstances creates some disillusionment that impedes the victim's informed trust in pastoral caregivers such as counselors, priests, pastors, and family therapists. Cognitive reconstruction in people or families experiencing agony and persistent grief requires pastoral care ministers to assist the victims to move from naïve/blind trust to informed and educated trust.

Sometimes Christians hold naïve trust in those they have previously depended on for care and nurturing love yet the source of their emotional distresses needs further/advanced interventions. From experience, some of the Christians rely on priests, pastors, and parents for all kinds of emotional suffering. However, it would be imperative to know which challenge should be subjected to pastors, clinicians, therapists, law enforcement authorities, and criminal justice systems. Once the emotional challenges are not attended/addressed properly, severe cases will result in anxiety, anger, and ambivalence that may subsequently subject the victim to self-harm or suicidal attempts. Appropriate caregiving in such severe cases allows restoration of trust and encourage proper grieving or mourning for better cognitive reconstruction. When those who are emotionally depressed are left unattended to, the church is at a very high risk of perpetuating and triangulating broken relationships between Christians and God because keeping church ministers and pastors with dysregulated emotions characterized by unwillingness/inability to rebuild trust. Cases such as sexual abuse, harassment, unwanted pregnancies, threats, and intimidations against church ministers and pastors need pastoral caregivers who have

adequate and formative experiences. They are characterized by severe emotional response patterns such as shame, guilt, identity problems, deteriorated self-esteem, depression, anxiety, and fear, all of which require informative experience to handle.

During my pastoral work, I encountered with Pastor Grace who was struggling with many issues and had battled them for so long. She was a professional therapist and pastor. In her community activities, she was always assaulted by her managers, who had reached the extent of threatening her that she will lose her job if she does not meet their sexual desires. She came to me seeking help on how she can get rid of her emotional distresses. As a counselor, it was deemed necessary to protect her anonymity and bridge the gap between Pastor Grace and her managers at the workplace while ensuring that she is able to cope with the situation very well. Pastor Grace narrated that she has tried all possible means to manage the situation using her pastoral skills and therapeutic experience but has failed. She narrates *“I could read the bible regularly and attend church weekly. I even attended nine-month part-time Bible studies. I even fasted. However, I am still far from seeing or experiencing Jesus’ promise of abundant living. I thought to myself, God, I’ve done enough. You’ve got to fix my problems, right?”*

In all these, emotional distress related to her workplace, Pastor Grace also had marital issues as her husband had some extramarital affairs. She was in deep sorrows and believed that by playing computer games or coming home late at night would calm down the situation. One day she met a Good Samaritan who recommended her to The Flow Kingdom Ministries. During my first encounter with Pastor Grace, I began asking her a lot of questions to understand her situations and the probable causes of her emotional suffering. After understanding her situation, I had to hold her hand and we prayed together

to commit her body, mind, emotions and spirit to Jesus Christ and restore her hope in God's healing power. In the middle of the prayer, I noticed that Grace had started crying as she could not open her lips to pray with me. I summarized the prayer and told her to sit down for the counseling session. I shared the word of God in relation to suffering and its meaning in pastoral work then I told her about inner healing and deliverance. I called some of the members of my support groups and we organized the next meeting for inner healing and deliverance service with Pastor Grace. Then Grace left the church that evening and came back in the next day where we shared a lot about the meaning of her suffering together with the selected counselors and Grace felt relieved of the load that she had carried on her chest. The load of guilt, grief, and pain concerning her marital issues was released. She also got relieved of the guilt and the bondage that perhaps her problems were brought by her past sins, unbelief in God, fear, hurts and lack of forgiveness at the workplace. Subsequently, I began to identify an improvement in her cognitive response patterns such as personalization, association, improved memories and thoughts, realization, and positive perceptions towards inner healing and deliverance. As of now, Grace's life has completely changed and she no longer experiences any form of emotional distresses caused by unnecessary bondages and debilitating pains that had ruined her marriage affairs and workplace relationships. She currently lives in the abundance of God's favor upon her. Grace's testimony depicts the importance of having an experienced and informative pastoral caregiver who takes rational decision making by going deep to explore the cause of emotional suffering before handling the presented symptoms of the suffering. The meeting that I conducted with her leaders in the absence of Grace contributed a lot towards the restoration of her relationship with them. Prayers and inner healing services created

light and opened Grace's heart to receive the abundance of God's favor hence she has managed to grow mature in Christ. She testifies that "*...through the inner healing I received from God, I am as free as I can be, and above all, I am able to grow and mature with the Lord... Jesus came that I might have life abundantly*".

4.3 Physical suffering

At the point when we take a glimpse at the delicacies of what was happening with Jesus in Gethsemane, we can see a few signs of the amount He was continuing physically. It is anything but difficult to see physical enduring when Roman officers were abusing him. They slapped him, whipped him, put a crown of thistles on his head, made him convey his instrument of death, and was nailed to that cross. However, Jesus in Gethsemane was enduring some time before these disciplines. The writers of the Gospels portrayed what was occurring with the physical appearance of Jesus. As per the story of the Synoptic Gospels, Jesus was disturbed, tossed himself on the ground, admitted that the tissue was powerless, and was his perspiration like enormous drops of blood falling on the ground. These were physical confirmations of how much agony and anguish He was enduring. He had if the healer for a large portion of his grown-up life. Around then, He was an injured healer since he needed to spare humankind.

While I was pondering this reality, I recalled again what I saw my dad endure his life. As a worker of Jesus, I do realize the problems that my father faced to brought me up. There will be multiple issues that my parents faced as workers of God. I have also faced some critical issues, but these issues were cured. It was an alarm for me that these pastors also face such troubles as human beings. Our body functions can present the wrong side. However, presently I have learned that completing work in spite of the enduring of the

body is something that does an individual with enthusiasm and a genuine love for the obligations endowed to them by the Almighty. The physical problems of humanity can recur through rehabilitation strategies that help maintain health.

The physical response of Jesus in Gethsemane enables me to comprehend his humanity. I put stock in a recorded and human Jesus, conceived of fragile living creature and blood. This is in opposition to Docetism. This conviction framework communicates that the indication of Christ, alongside his humanity and his verifiable presence, were straightforward appearances without a genuine reality. This is necessary as reality should be shared. This brings a positive attitude. The fundamental articulation thinks that Jesus seemed, by all accounts, to be human; however, in reality, His physical body was an apparition or a soul. There are individuals, for example, Marcion, who advanced this line of reasoning, which I thoroughly reject.

The historical backdrop of Christianity likewise instructs us that Docetism got one of the most significant elements of Gnosticism, which protects the possibility that Jesus was an extraterrestrial errand person who originated from outside to this present arrangement of life, however, was not impacted by the hatred of this world. Jean Petrolle discussed to the Docetism debate and stated, "There are a few people who pronounce that Jesus Christ didn't come in the tissue, however, just as a soul yet that he showed a spooky appearance in the substance."³⁹

³⁹ Petrolle, Jean. *Dancing with Ophelia: Reconnecting Madness, Creativity, and Love*. Albany: Excelsior Editions, 2018.

Significantly, we comprehend the physical enduring of Jesus in Gethsemane in such a case that we acknowledge this regulation of Docetism; at that point, his physical enduring was not genuine, and his penance doesn't make a difference. A spirit, or a soul, doesn't know physical irritation since it has nobody. Physiological enduring is proved by the sensory system and influences the organs of the body. For the Gnostics, this is fairly immeasurable because of their hypothesis of a spooky body. I can't help thinking that in Gethsemane, we see proof and proof that Jesus had a human body and that his enduring was genuine. Berry appears to concur with this idea when he says that, "It is the point at which we watch Jesus Christ that we can perceive that God's divinity doesn't avoid, however, incorporates his humanity."⁴⁰ Berry proceeds with his contention in regards to the humankind of God through Jesus talking about his demonstrations of sympathy towards us as verification of his mankind. He doesn't see a logical inconsistency between his heavenly nature and his humankind. I concur with your contentions since I can comprehend Jesus as a total unit. He was not just God, and He was not just man: He was God-Man. Along these lines, his enduring influenced his mankind similarly that it influenced his holiness.

Jesus was human, like us. He realized that an amazing finish on earth as a human was going to occur. I contrast this involvement in that of a detainee who has been condemned to capital punishment. Ordinarily, individuals have the desire that in the removed future, their life here on earth will end. I can imagine that knowing precisely the day and the best approach to die produces incredible anguish and misery, particularly when it would be in such a frightful way. On account of my dad, I didn't see him perspiring drops

⁴⁰." Berry, Anna. *Unhinged: A Memoir of Enduring, Surviving, and Overcoming Family Mental Illness*. Lanham: Rowman & Littlefield, 2014.

of blood, yet his delicate body was all that could be needed evidence of his torment. Commonly, while I was outside his room tuning in to his moan and his intercessory supplications, I pondered, on the off chance that he implored like that for chapel individuals, how could he petition God for me that I am his child? At the point when we complete the process of supplicating strongly, we should feel depleted and overpowered. Jesus felt a genuine physiological torment in his genuine physical body, however the true anguish was actually in his soul.

4.4 Social suffering

Social suffering is due to the absence of the social needs of church leaders. The cup is a social instrument of cooperation and celebration. People drink from a beverage at weddings, birthday festivities, social suppers, and unique events. Jesus utilized this instrument and changed it into something somber and agonizing. At the point when we drink from a beverage in the social condition, we are welcoming others to be a piece of our joy and our triumphs. Be that as it may, this was not a period of festivity but rather of affliction. Along these lines, when He tells the Father if there is a probability of passing or not drinking the cup, He said this because there was nobody else with whom to share this cup of misery. The disciples had said they were eager to drink from the cup, yet now they were dozing, and He was separated from everyone. Social suffering can be due to family matters as the church leaders need to maintain the privacy of their family from the public.

Pastoral work sometimes reaches a stage of getting stuck because the pastor's social needs have not been fulfilled. Social suffering creates a fallen world around the life of the great men and women of God yet their work should transform them to become Christians. Some disciples in the ministerial work are forced to possess ungodly beliefs and values

concerning their social needs. When these beliefs and values are not fulfilled, they get hurtful experiences and blame God for their social challenges. Overwhelming social needs create sinful habitual behaviors and subject pastors to worldly appetites for social recognition, which subjects them to the occult. Therefore, the pastoral caregivers have a special role to play to assist the socially suffering pastors to embrace the values of God's kingdom and enter it in eternity. Pastoral care cannot effectively address the social sufferings of the great women and men of God if the church does not have inner healing and deliverance sessions in their ministerial structures.

Pastors whose spiritual growth is overwhelmed by emotional suffering cannot assist the congregants and other believers to progress in assimilating truth in their daily lives. Social suffering creates insecurity between the pastor and his relationships with the believers. Besides, it obstructs his/her relationship with God because he/she feels not sure of how God thinks about him/her since he thinks that he is socially isolated from God.

I have also noted that social suffering makes the great men of God more self-dependent than God-dependent. They also live a life of self-centeredness instead of sharing what they have with others. In addition, they cannot utilize their spiritual and moral authority in their lives. They also complain and blame everyone around them for their failures, personal hurts, and bondage, which inhibits their progress in fulfilling God's plan for their mission. The socially ruined disciples have so many burdens hence they are helpless to God and to their followers. They lack real interaction with fellow Christians and the Holy Spirit seems to be far from them nor can they receive the word of God hence they are likely to fall back and return to the ancient spiritual practices. These obstructions hinder the pastors/ministers' interest in their growth and well-being hence they need inner

healing and deliverance to address their social suffering, relate with God and their fellow Christians and experience the love of God upon their lives.

In some churches, the social suffering of pastors is exacerbated by the refusal of the believer to commit to support groups and become so busy that they have no time to attend social gatherings. The spirit of social isolation or rejection forces some of the suffering pastors or church ministers to refuse pastoral counseling because they do not trust everyone around them for assisting them to grow spiritually and socially. The same spirit forces the sufferer to lose interest in the spiritual disciplines of ministerial work and God's word. In other words, the spirit of social isolation and rejects obstructs the ability of the Christian to see the root issues surrounding his social difficulties and subsequently inhibits his/her spiritual growth and breakthroughs. Social suffering makes the pastor end up staying in denial and ignorant of the ways through which they can use social support to transform their lives. To a certain extent, the social suffering experienced by the great women and men of God can be addressed by educating and changing the mindset through various approaches such as prophetic prayers, prophetic activation, organizing Christian living classes, personal devotions, bible study, and one-on-one preaching. In some churches, these discipleship methods have not been effecting in assisting believers to move in the will of God and grow in Christ. Before inner healing and deliverance were introduced in The Flow Kingdom Ministries, it was not easy to retain believers and equip them with powers to deal with all forms of social suffering because they were scattered with their personal challenges, some with broken hearts and religious idols while others facing social prejudices. Today, The Flow Kingdom Ministries has a wide range of discipleship and social support programs that extends beyond the church into the community. Through these

programs, the great men and women and God have got platforms on which they can express their social challenges and get counseling services and psychosocial support from fellow Christians. In addition, the church utilizes these discipleship and social support programs to conduct dedicated teachings about various social affairs affecting Christians such as marriage, family, prophetic ministry, counseling, physical healing, intercession, worship, personal devotion and bible study, which has assisted many great men and women of God to respond to these teachings for better renewal of their mind for transformation of their social lifestyles. Those who were struggling with social oppressions and bondages have grown mature in Christ and broken the chain of temptations that were creating bad acts such as self-harm, suicide, substance abuse among others. In addition, people are no longer defensive of their social attitudes as they are no longer offended during social gatherings. The spirit of isolation and rejection had previously ruined their connections and interactions with fellow Christians. Because of the broken bondage from the spirit of rejection and isolation, it is now easier to conduct discipleship processes at Kingdom church ministry. Social suffering had created struggles for the church to connect its members and retain them in unison. However, leadership and training development created many passionate and serious church ministers who rose up to serve and reach those who were experiencing social suffering helped those who were suffering to get relieved of their burdens and welcome the Holy Spirit in their lives.

Social suffering creates discouragement and makes pastors and church ministers feel stuck in their spiritual and personal growth. They get stuck because they carry social burdens from their families, workplaces, ministerial responsibilities, and communities where they serve. If such burdens are not resolved, they cannot move forward in their

ministry even if they keep on trying to breakthrough because they cannot help themselves to break the bondage of social rejection so that they can live godly lives. In addition, pastors who are experiencing social suffering in their pastoral work cannot take up spiritual authority to fulfill their dedication to save believers' souls.

From experience, I have seen Christian leaders and pastors who are still bounded in their unresolved social issues that keep on blocking their spiritual manifestation. Some of the notable issues include; relationship challenges, marital issues, spiritual involvements, previous religious challenges, hurts from rejection and social discrimination, guilt and shame, among others. The unaddressed issues tend to form social and emotional blockages and subsequently reinforce spiritual blockages and wrong belief systems that hinder the great women and men of God from accepting God to transform their lives.

The Flow Kingdom Ministries has established many programs to assist church ministers, pastors and congregants to get out of the disruptive social suffering and break the bondage of ungodly foundations hence they are able to facilitate their transformational discipleship and grow mature in Christ. The church has offered a wide range of means through which the great women and men of God can release their ungodly belief systems by sharing the Word and discussing various social challenges affecting them. This has assisted them to get more informed and understand the real-life challenges henceforth align and assimilate their thinking to God's purpose and biblical truth in their lives. To the great women and men of God, The Flow Kingdom Ministries has proven to be an effective and fast way to help them recover from strongholds, bondages, and emotional wounds culminating from social and spiritual suffering. Testimonies presented on Sundays, morning prayers and lunch hour prayer sessions witness my assertion that The Flow

Kingdom Ministries has assisted church ministers and pastors towards progress in their maturity in Christ hence they are able to conduct their pastoral service without any social bondage/stronghold. The Ministry and teaching obtained at The Flow Kingdom Ministries have enabled many Disciples of Christ to continuously build themselves in Christ. They feel no separation from the large Christian community and God is in them. In addition, pastors and other great women and men of God have developed the passion for service, because they feel they are loved by God since there are no obstacles blocking their spirituality. In other words, they are no longer sensitive to any social stronghold hence they cannot get hurt in their social suffering because they are able to recover from such social bondages by dedicating all problems to God and praying for themselves. Subsequently, more believers have been inspired to join the ministry and the number of those who are open to discipleship has tremendously increased. Forgiveness in families, workplaces and in church ministry has tremendously improved because of social support programs and this has created stronger social relationships and facilitated communion hence improving God's acceptance to their supplications. They have grown mature in Christ and integrated into church ministry hence they can serve happily as a family in the children's ministry. When the great women and men of God are healed/delivered from the bondage of rejection, agony, social isolation, shame, and guilt, they become more confident and gain esteem to partake in the divine nature of Christ. They no longer fear nor do they get to stress about what people are thinking about them hence they can use the Word of God to overcome their social suffering and related issues such as rejection, isolation, fear and low self-identity. More so, inner healing enables them to handle their relationships well and stay in unity.

CONCLUSION

This study explores the role of inner healing and deliverance in promoting pastoral work among the pastors, church ministers, and all the staff members who carry the responsibility of promoting God's ministry. In many local churches, the discipleship processes are centered on preaching the ways of instruction, knowledge dissemination, educational, cognitive, and behavioral development and understanding the word of God. All these themes do not consider the aspects of healing and deliverance in the leadership structure of the church. In my view, healing, & deliverance are the essential elements of the leadership structure of the church and should be fully integrated into the programs of the church for the purposes of promoting maturity and growth among the great women and men of God. This integral element should exist in an inclusive manner to reach every church minister or pastor who needs to receive prayer counseling and biblical teaching to address their social, physical, emotional, and spiritual challenges. The aim is to bring the pastors and other staff members closer to God after breaking such bondages and yokes of inner suffering. Inner healing and deliverance results in impactful and effective means of reducing all the strongholds affecting spiritual growth using conventional representations of Christian discipleship.

This research thesis has presented the various ways through which pastors can use inner healing and deliverance services to renew their relationship and faith in Christ, restore hope and transform the lives of the congregants by imparting the biblical truths. My research has is primarily supported by the existing literature and the empirical data collected from the survey in which I conducted with 80 respondents that were having a direct relationship with The FLOW Kingdom Ministries.

I am a senior pastor who oversees the Flow Kingdom Ministries in collaboration with several church ministers and pastors, some of which are social workers, volunteers, and prayer counselors working with our ministry. The church has a pastoral care ministry program for providing support, care, personal ministry, teaching, and leadership training to the staff members at the ministry. The Flow Kingdom Ministries also over consultation and training to various local churches around the Bronx community and it extends into various communities under the community-based pastor leadership model.

The reason behind the provision of the inner healing and deliverance at the Flow Kingdom Ministries is to assist the victims of suffering to gain a spiritual understanding of Christ's healing power by improving the psyche and feelings as well as promoting their liberation from demonic oppression. I have characterized the various mental issues that pastors sometimes face in their lives. I have also presented the means which can be useful, passionate, or profoundly important in improving the pastor's health. By following the Biblical verses, I have identified facts related to the agony that a church and staff member can feel like a common human being. Mental and emotional suffering negatively affects the psychological functioning of the pastor and if such challenges are not addressed, they can culminate into anxiety, depression, insomnia, panic attacks, and other mental disorders. Church leaders and staff may not be able to express such issues due to the strict rules of conducting ministerial work-life hence they may accept to suffer internally. Inner sickness may not allow someone to complete the ministerial assignments effectively as the followers of Christ. It has been determined that some of the church ministers in Bronx churches cannot comprehend/understand the real maiming of inner healing and deliverance. The staff at the Pentecostal and Charismatic churches are following the inner healing and

deliverance but to a less extent. Moreover, a few churches were present in the county of the Bronx with such activities. At the Flow Kingdom Ministries, inner healing sessions were being performed years ago although concept about the inner healing and deliverance has not deeply penetrated the lives of some pastors yet they are the ones who administer it. Pastors and church ministers need a specialized healing process at the Flow Kingdom Ministries. A few churches have been funded to keep the inner healing as priority, and they are developing such activities effectively. Spiritual growth and maturity at some of these churches have significantly increased because of the routine meetings and social support groups formed by pastors and other church ministers.

The purpose of the current research was to assess the behavioral change among the selected regions where the proper meetings were established to collect first-hand data. The presented research findings indicate that there has been a significant change in the behavior of pastors and church staff. The results of the research were in favor of a dire need for spiritual healing, which cannot be effective without sharing their problem that church leaders are facing. The church of the Northern region was selected to arrange the spiritual healing sessions. Research groups focused on assessing the need for inner healing for the mental problems indicate that inner healing and deliverance should be prioritized as the primary activity in the leadership development of pastors and church ministers. Church leaders take inner healing as a motivating factor, but they may not willing to share their suffering publicly. There is a need to have an established proper environment in which pastors and other religious leaders can express their suffering to address their private concerns. Inner healing activities should not be placed on the wall of the church because some people may be facing medical complications that may spread the inner sickness to

the whole church. These medical issues should be resolved through clinical interventions and therapies such as cognitive therapy exercises.

Discipleship must bear the ontological realities of Christ through the work and power of the Holy Spirit. Inner healing and deliverance is an integral element of discipleship that touches the lives of all believers since it assumes that everyone had suffered from the fallen nature of humankind throughout their life journeys before knowing Jesus as Savior and Lord. It is the work of realigning the mind of the sufferer, healing of the emotions, and deliverance from any demonic spiritual strongholds and brings the wholeness (mind, body, soul, spirit) of a person into the pursuit of God's will. The aim of reflecting Jesus Christ in restoring a person from Mental and emotional suffering to a sound mind is to help the victim discover and grow in their relationship with God and have a sense of belonging in the community. In Mark 16:15-18, Jesus commands disciples to preach the gospel. He promised that they would carry on the ministry that He first established - working deliverance with signs and wonders to those who are suffering. Following this assignment, the church has chosen to follow healing and deliverance through works related to signs and wonders. Jesus Christ is our role model because he extended His movement of healing and deliverance upon everyone he encountered with a need.

The proliferation of the Pentecostal movement in the world has made healing and deliverance become a vivid ministry in many churches today. However, the concept of the inner healing movement is less popular outside of the local church. Flow Kingdom Ministries extends the message of inner healing and deliverance beyond the walls of the church. The primary objective is to bring mental and emotional healing closer to the

believers and save them from the bondage of spiritual oppression, isolation, rejection, sicknesses and mental disorders. Theologically, inner healing and deliverance are one of God's works that elevate pastoral care through the works of the Holy Spirit. The response of believers to God's progressive work reflects the likeness of Jesus Christ in promoting healing and deliverance. This dissertation has highlighted my skills in promoting healing and deliverance in churches as a senior pastor but I have also learned how to arrange meetings for productive Christian engagements. The solutions that I have got from the exercise will help me in building a great vision for the prosperity of the church. At the end of this study, I feel advantaged to have gotten the heavenly motivation and inspiration to make constructive and beautiful visions for the future progress of the Work of God. Work is simply starting. I have highlighted about the society where the ministries were being ignored hence left suffering in peak agony. This has given me an approach to develop a setup further to add more knowledge on various ways of promoting healing and deliverance while working for Jesus Christ.

Pastors are great women and men of God and they are also great leaders like Prophet Moses. However, they must be careful in their ministerial work so that they are not carried away by the snares of this world. In Deuteronomy 1:15, God advises Moses on how to make decisions that benefit all the people. He says *"Moreover you shall select from all the people able men, such as fear God, men of truth, hating covetousness; and place such over them to be leaders of thousands, leaders of hundreds, leaders of fifties, and leaders of tens."* Many churches are struggling with the creation of a formidable leadership infrastructure that would take up the responsibility of caretaking, leadership, and spiritual discipleship not because they do not have the people to accept such roles but because all the capable leaders are held in the bondage by inner suffering. Pastors should be careful and avoid the great mistake of doing God's work

according to their ways like Moses did out of persistent frustrations about the response and actions of the congregation against God's ways of work. The congregation frustrated Moses and he struck the rock twice instead of obeying God's instruction. This had to cost his life even if God rewarded him for doing His work. In the book of Acts 6:1-4, we read that *"It is not desirable that we should leave the word of God and serve tables. Therefore, brethren, seek out from among you seven men of good reputation, full of the Holy Spirit and wisdom, whom we may appoint over this business; but we will give ourselves continually to prayer and to the ministry of the word."* This is a great inspiration for the church to establish a robust foundation for the spread of the word of God and promotion of inner healing and deliverance by enabling the pastor to act as living examples to the rest of the congregation.

Suffering is not going to end since our forefathers in Christ also experienced it but continued to progress the Ministerial work because the firm foundation on which their ministry was laid. For example, Saint Paul suffered through his ministry both as a missionary and as an apostle. His services were marked by oppression, persecution and other forms of suffering but his response to suffering is a great role model to the pastors and church ministers who experience suffering in the 21st century. God did not anoint Paul to only proclaim His name but also reflect Jesus Christ suffering and this call to suffering is reflected in Paul's testimony in his letter to 2 Corinthians 6:4-10; 4:7-11; 11:23-28. The calling to suffering is the calling to teach and preach. In Paul's letters to Timothy and to Philippians, he emphasizes the importance and the significance of suffering while doing God's ministry, (Philippians 1:29; 3:10; 2 Timothy 3:12; 1:8; 2:9; 2:2-3). In all these biblical references, we can see that Paul explains the life of persecution and intense suffering in the ministry of teaching and preaching the word of God. Therefore, when appointing church ministers, the concept of suffering should be brought forward because it is directly related to the believer's commitment to

the will of God. The minister of the Gospel is expected to be faithful to God in difficult times. From the beginning of his ministry, Paul knew of the difficulties he was going to encounter but he still remained desirous to serving God because he had a firm foundation. Unfortunately, many pastors and church ministers who commit to pastoral work are not informed of the loneliness, hardships, oppression, difficulties and criticisms they are likely to face in their commitment to the ministry. This is a reason as to why they suffer mental disorders and other forms of spiritual, emotional, and physical inner suffering when they face such trials. Therefore, it would be prudent to have special programs in which pastors should be trained and reoriented to resist suffering effects, the destructive aspects of suffering and equip them with skills to endure diversity in their ministry profile.

Like Paul, Peter suffered in his ministry as a pastor and as an apostle but because he was acquainted with suffering and diversity, he remained committed to the work of God, (Mathew 4:18; 1 Peter 5:1-4; Luke 22:31-32; 1 Peter 1:3-7). Peter's faith enabled him to resist satanic temptations during his emotional suffering. For instance, sifting and trial informed Peter that there are many Christians who undergo suffering but their faith helps them to get restored. To him. Suffering is a path to Glory because it promotes sanctification, restores the faith of the believer, educates him on the virtues of Christianity such as perseverance and endurance and creates an opportunity to imitate Jesus Christ, (1 Peter. 4:12; 1 Peter. 1:6-7; Romans 5:3-4; James 1:3-4; 1 Peter 3:17-18). All these benefits are shreds of evidence of sanctification in the life of a believer.

For all of us who are involved in pastoral work, suffering is inevitable and part of the process of deepening and refining our faith in Christ, our Lord and savior. Peter and Paul are some of the few exemplars of suffering reflected in the New Testament in areas

concerning the leadership of the local church. Unfortunately, it seems that the 21st-century pastors are not fully equipped with the knowledge of how to deal with the suffering that may come to their ways. When pastors and church ministers are overwhelmed by stress, fear, anxiety, sicknesses, shame, guilt, persecution, oppression, criticisms and other forms of mental disturbances, some of them are tempted to quit the vocational ministry and change to a less stressful job. Churches should have a systemic approach to pastoral care to equip the pastors and church ministers with differentiation and wisdom in ministry and leadership hence secure the longevity of God's ministry. Specialized pastoral support and meetings/fellowships will assist pastors and other religious leaders to understand that God uses suffering as a tool to deepen and strengthen their faith not to weaken them as they are made to think. Secondly, ministries should include the course of resilience training in preparation of pastors and other church ministers while they are still in universities, seminaries, and bible colleges. This would prepare pastors and their marriage partners the cost of undertaking the ministry career in their lives. Ministries should also shift to renewing the perspectives of church leaders on the value of diversity and how it shapes them for richer ministerial outcomes. Last but not the least, religious ministries and organizations should embark on congregational educations and sensitization concerning the cost of suffering and pastoral attrition. When the pastor is pained, filled with sadness, or demoralized, the capacity to remain focused, energized and empathic to God's ministry is greatly inhibited by the inner suffering. However, churches need to have full-time pastors hence attrition of pastors creates a great depression in the church that may take more time to replace. I implore the church leadership in all local churches to take a

proactive position on pastoral care that ensures smooth governance frameworks and share the pastor's personal challenges and conflict issues as a whole.

Above all, we should not give up because we are experiencing inner suffering. Even if our inner person might have been destroyed by the kind of hurting situations that we have gone through in the past, there is hope that our inner person can be easily renewed if we get close to God. I will end with the following bible verses; “*So we do not focus on what is seen, but on what is unseen. For what is seen is temporary, but what is unseen is eternal*” -2 Corinthians 4:16-18 NIV. “*But he knows the way that I take; when he has tested me, I will come forth as gold*”. – Job 23:10 NIV. “*Do not fear, for I am with you; do not be afraid, for I am your God. I will strengthen you; I will help you; I will hold on to you with my righteous right hand*” – Isaiah 41:10 NIV. In all these verses, God is speaking to us through his words and he promises to ease our suffering while doing our ministerial calling. When we read the word of God, we learn how to use our suffering for growth and maturity in Christ.

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Appendix 1: Questionnaire Survey

Questionnaire

Question 1. Gender

Answered: 80

Skipped: 0

Answers	Responses	
a. Male	96.25 %	77
b. Female	03.75 %	3
Total	80	

Question 2. Age of the participants

Answered: 80

Skipped: 0

Answers	Responses	
a. 18-35	37.50 %	30
b. 36-45	31.25 %	25
c. 46-55	12.50 %	10
d. 56 and above	18.75 %	15
Total	80	

Question 3. Education/Qualification

Answered: 80

Skipped: 0

Answers	Responses	
a. JHS / GCE 'O' level	25.00 %	20
b. SHS / GCE 'A' level	18.75 %	15
c. Professional Edu. HND.	25.00 %	20
d. Degree and Above	31.25 %	25
Total	80	

Question 4. Duration of Membership

Answered: 80

Skipped: 0

Answers	Responses
a. 1-5 years	37.50 % 30
b. 6-10 years	37.50 % 30
c. 11-15 years	12.50 % 10
d. 16 and Above	12.50 % 10
Total	80

Question 5. How did you became the member of The Flow Kingdom Ministries

Answered: 80

Skipped: 0

Answers	Responses
a. By Birth	25.00 % 20
b. Personal Interaction	37.50 % 30
c. Motivated by Others	12.50 % 10
d. Due to Split	12.50 % 10
Total	80

Question 6. You became a member at the event?

Answered: 80

Skipped: 0

Answers	Responses
a. Individual Conversion	50.00 % 40
b. Crusade	12.50 % 10
c. Radio and TV Programs	18.75 % 15
d. Annual Convention	18.75 % 15
Total	80

Question 7. What position do you have in the church?

Answered: 80

Skipped: 0

Answers	Responses	
a. Prayer Warrior	37.50 %	30
b. Member	25.00 %	20
c. Elder	12.50 %	10
d. Catechist	18.75 %	15
e. Others	06.50 %	5
Total	80	

Question 8. Where do you place The Flow Kingdom Ministries among other churches in the county of Bronx?

Answered: 80

Skipped: 0

Answers	Responses	
a. Pentecostal	31.25 %	25
b. Charismatic	37.50 %	30
c. Prophetic	25.00 %	20
d. African Instituted	6.25 %	5
e. None	00.00 %	0
Total	80	

Question 9. Inner healing and Deliverance is being practiced in The Flow Kingdom Ministries?

Answered: 80

Skipped: 0

Answers	Responses	
a. Yes	68.75 %	55
b. No	31.25 %	25
Total	80	

Question 10. From how long you are observing inner healing and deliverance (IHD) practice?

Answered: 80

Skipped: 0

Answers	Responses
a. 1-3 years	33.75 % 30
b. 4-6 years	28.75 % 23
c. 7-9 years	25.00 % 20
d. 10 and Above years	06.25 % 5
Total	80

Question 11. Does The Flow Kingdom Ministries is also practicing IHD in theological education?

Answered: 80

Skipped: 0

Answers	Responses
a. Yes	37.50 % 30
b. No	50.00 % 40
c. Not Sure	12.50 % 10
Total	80

Question 12. Does The Flow Kingdom Ministries is keeping IHD as a routine activity?

Answered: 80

Skipped: 0

Answers	Responses
a. Yes	31.25 % 25
b. No	56.25 % 45
c. Not Sure	12.50 % 10
Total	80

Question 13. How often you have observed the IHD practice within The Flow Kingdom Ministries?

Answered: 80

Skipped: 0

Answers	Responses	
a. After One Week	31.25 %	25
b. Once in a Month	50.00 %	40
c. Quarterly	18.75 %	15
d. Yearly	00.00 %	0
Total	80	

Question 14. Are you aware of the mental illness like Panic attacks, depression and poor self-esteem?

Answered: 80

Skipped: 0

Answers	Responses	
a. Yes	37.50 %	30
b. No	62.50 %	50
Total	80	

Question 15. Do you like to attend the seminars related to inner IHD?

Answered: 80

Skipped: 0

Answers	Responses	
a. Yes	93.75 %	75
b. No	06.25 %	5
Total	80	

Question 16. Do you think healing and deliverance activities should be followed to care for pastoral mental health?

Answered: 80

Skipped: 0

Answers	Responses	
a. Yes	93.75 %	75
b. No	00.00 %	0
c. Not Responded	06.25 %	5
Total	80	

Question 17. Have you observed IHD have any impact over the growth of church?

Answered: 80

Skipped: 0

Answers	Responses	
a. Yes	56.25 %	45
b. No	31.25 %	25
c. Not Sure	00.00 %	0
Total	80	

Question 18. How often you want to have IHD practice in the church?

Answered: 80

Skipped: 0

Answers	Responses	
a. After One Week	37.50 %	30
b. Once in a Month	37.50 %	30
c. Quarterly	25.00 %	20
d. Yearly	00.00 %	0
Total	80	

Question 19. Have you observed any leader or church staff member facing inner sickness?

Answered: 80

Skipped: 0

Answers	Responses
a. Yes	68.75 % 55
b. No	12.50 % 10
c. Not Observed	18.75 % 15
Total	80

Question 20. Do you prefer such activities for future of church leaders and staff as a whole?

Answered: 80

Skipped: 0

Answers	Responses
a. Yes	68.75 % 55
b. No	06.25 % 5
c. Not Observed	25.00 % 20
Total	80

Question 21. Annual salary you are getting?

Answered: 80

Skipped: 0

Answers	Responses
a. Less than \$25000	37.50 % 30
b. \$25000-\$30000	25.00 % 20
c. \$25000 and More	37.50 % 30
Total	80

Appendix 2: Timeline

Date	Task/Activity	Tools to Complete Task	Person Responsible
10/12/18	Setting apart those who require deliverance	IPad with speech using a Teleprompt Program, Paper copy with the Speech	Israel Pena, Nataisha Perez
10/28/18	Informational to explain the financial significance of the project.	Projector, Portable Screen, Laptop Computer, Copies of Resources and Handouts	Israel Pena, Nataisha Pena
11/14/18	Report of the project before the Fellowship of Affecting Destiny	Projector, Portable Screen, Laptop Computer	Israel Pena Nataisha Perez
12/3/18	Training Session for volunteers	Projector, Portable Screen, Laptop Computer, Copies of Resources and Handouts	Israel Pena Nataisha Perez
12/19/18	Training Session for volunteers	Projector, Portable Screen, Laptop Computer, Copies of Resources and Handouts	Israel Pena Nataisha Perez
1/5/19	Proposal approval by Director	2 Copies	Israel Pena
TBD	Support Group Meeting	Projector, Portable Screen, Laptop Computer, Copies of Resources and Handouts	TBD

TBD	Exit Interviews	Handouts	Israel Pena
TBD	Evaluation Meeting	Laptop Computer and Handouts	Israel Pena TBD
TBD	Support Group Meeting	Projector, Portable Screen, Laptop Computer, Copies of Resources and Handouts	TBD
TBD	Support Group Meeting	Projector, Portable Screen, Laptop Computer, Copies of Resources and Handouts	Israel Pena TBD
TBD	Evaluation Meeting	Laptop Computer and Handouts	Israel Pena TBD
TBD	Evaluation Meeting	Laptop Computer and Handouts	Israel Pena TBD
TBD	Support Group Meeting	Projector, Portable Screen, Laptop Computer, Copies of Resources and Handouts	Israel Pena TBD
TBD	Exit Interviews	Handouts	Israel Pena
TBD	Exit Interviews	Handouts	Israel Pena
TBD	Exit Interviews	Handouts	Israel Pena
TBD	Social Outing with one to three ministers individually and in different dates	Restaurant	Israel Pena
TBD	Support Group Meeting	Projector, Portable Screen, Laptop Computer, Copies of Resources and Handouts	TBD
TBD	Support Group Meeting	Projector, Portable Screen, Laptop Computer, Copies of Resources and Handouts	Israel Pena TBD

TBD	Group Meeting with every minister and volunteers participating in the support group meetings.	Meal, Projector, Laptop Computer, Handouts	TBD
TBD	Social Outing with one to three ministers individually and in different dates	Restaurant	Israel Pena
TBD	Social Outing with one to three ministers individually and in different dates	Restaurant	Israel Pena
TBD	Social Outing with one to three ministers individually and in different dates	Restaurant	Israel Pena
TBD	Social Outing with one to three ministers individually and in different dates	Restaurant	Israel Pena
TBD	Meeting with the Site Team	Handouts, Laptop Computer	Israel Pena
TBD	Compiling the results, the answers and opinion throughout the different support group meetings	Handouts, copies, Laptop Computer	Israel Pena Nataisha Perez
TBD	Social event with the Deliverance Ministers and volunteers	Church	Israel Pena

Appendix 3: Budget

Budget Item	Projected Cost
Copies	\$55.00
Printing	\$100.00
Meals with Ministers	\$300.00
Social Event Meal	\$400.00
Volunteers	\$100.00
Travel Expenses	\$100.00
Guest Speakers	\$200.00
Gifts	\$100.00
Site Team Meetings	\$20.00
Total	\$1375.00

